

U.S. ambassador, Senator visit Sidon-wounded

SIDON (AFP) — The U.S. ambassador to Lebanon, Richard Jones, accompanied by visiting U.S. Senator Robert Kerrey, visited the bedside of people wounded in the shelling of Sidon this week by an Israeli-backed militia. Mr. Jones and Mr. Kerrey were accompanied on their hospital tour in this southern port city by Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri. Mr. Kerrey, a senior member of the U.S. Senate Intelligence Committee, said he was "very sorry for the loss of civilian life and the wounded." "The U.S. will do all it can to stop this," said Mr. Kerrey, a Democrat from Nebraska, who arrived from Syria on a tour of the region. "In Jerusalem and Sidon, it is the civilians who paid the price." Six civilians, including a baby and two children, were killed and 38 other people wounded when the Israeli-backed South Lebanon Army (SLA) fired several rounds of shells into Sidon.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جوردان تايمز يومية سياسية مستقلة عن المؤسسة الصحفية الاردنية الراي

U.S. citizens warned about travelling or residing in Israel

WASHINGTON (AFP) — U.S. citizens travelling or residing in Israel should exercise caution in shopping areas and pedestrian areas, which have become the targets of terrorist attacks, according to the State Department. A statement from the U.S. embassy in Tel Aviv and consulate general in Jerusalem released Friday by the State Department said "recently attacks have shifted to pedestrian centres and shopping centres." U.S. citizens should "exercise caution in high traffic or crowded pedestrian areas, particularly in Jerusalem." In the announcement, U.S. citizens were advised to avoid large crowds and political demonstrations, and not remain in an area where a spontaneous gathering occurs.

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Government says Adasieh dam planned and paid for by Jordan

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordan announced Saturday that it intends to build a diversion dam at Adasieh, a point located between Jordanian and Israeli territories in order to divert its own share of the water of the Yarmouk River to the King Abdullah Canal.

An official Jordanian spokesman, who was quoted by the Jordan News Agency Petra, said "plans and designs for the construction of the dam together with the tender documents have been prepared and funded by Jordan, according to the provisions of the Jordan-Israel peace treaty."

The spokesman was responding to media reports that said Israel will be building a dam on the Yarmouk River at the Himmeh district and that an agreement was reached on the project with Jordan, Petra said. In this context, the agency quoted him as saying: "The Jordanian government, while expressing total astonishment at these reports, points to the provisions of the Jordan-Israel peace treaty and reaffirms its commitment to implement its articles in a manner that will by no means infringe on the rights

or interests of any third party, a commitment that was originally made by the two sides to the treaty."

The spokesman concluded by saying: "The Jordanian government stresses that it had not entered any negotiations or reached agreements that may affect bilateral negotiations between Israel and any Arab party, nor will it do so in the future."

The spokesman did not specifically cite any particular media report, but he appeared to be referring to an article carried by Israeli newspaper Ha'aretz on Friday, which said the Israeli government had decided to build the dam in territory claimed by Syria. The report said the decision was taken by National Infrastructure Minister Ariel Sharon, who reversed the policy of late Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin to implement the project within the "Green Line," the pre-1967 boundary between Israel and Jordan.

The Ha'aretz report, written by Ze'ev Schiff, claimed that Mr. Sharon consulted with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu before making the decision to build the dam, which will trap the waters of the Yarmouk River

in the former demilitarised zone (DMZ) of Al Himmeh. Prior to yesterday's official government statement Jordanian officials were saying privately that Jordan "would never raise a topic with the Israelis that may in any way affect or touch upon any interest of Syria, the Palestinians or any other party."

The dam's construction is stipulated in an annex to the Israel-Jordan treaty of 1994. It states that the two countries will cooperate on building a dam to trap and divert the water of the Yarmouk river near Adasieh. The dam is meant to store water before it is channelled into the King Abdullah Canal.

"The Jordanian reaction to Sharon's plan initially favoured Syria's claim to the land," the Ha'aretz report contended, quoting Jordanian officials as saying that the area in question was not Israeli territory.

"Amman later said that if Israel remained adamant it would seek compensation for the expenses it had incurred in planning the dam at the previous site. This was taken in some (Israeli) quarters to mean that Jordan would be willing to revise its original approach to the

Sharon plan," the Ha'aretz report claimed.

"Netanyahu apparently backed (Sharon's) idea. It is thought that Rabin had wanted to retain the former DMZ intact to enhance Israeli manoeuvrability in case of a proposal to exchange territory with the Syrians," Mr. Schiff wrote. "Rabin was determined to distance the Syrians from the northeast shore of the Kinneret (Sea of Galilee), even if this entailed an agreement to trade territory."

Meanwhile the Arab League slammed the Israeli project to build the dam on territory claimed by Syria as a new "provocation" to the Arab World by Israel, AFP reported from Cairo on Saturday.

Arab League Deputy Chief Mohammad Zakariya Ismail said the project "is a new provocation and a new form of blackmail by Israel."

"Israel's current policy, which is to defy U.N. Security Council resolutions and the terms of reference of the peace process, is doomed to failure," he said.

Mr. Ismail said the dam project was also aimed at driving a wedge between Syria and Jordan, but that Israel would fail in its goal.

Israeli planes blast south Lebanon after fierce fighting with Hizbollah

TYRE (AFP) — Israeli forces launched a series of air and artillery strikes against Hizbollah strongholds in south Lebanon Saturday after fierce fighting in which both sides claimed to have inflicted casualties.

Hizbollah said its guerrillas killed five Israeli soldiers and wounded seven others in a string of attacks on the so-called "security zone" in south Lebanon.

Israel's proxy militia, the South Lebanon Army (SLA), reported the deaths of at least one guerrilla in exchanges of fire in the occupied zone.

There was no independent confirmation of any casualties in the fighting, which came at the end of one of the worst weeks of violence in south Lebanon since an April 1996 ceasefire.

Meanwhile, a member of the pro-Syrian Amal movement, which carries out attacks against the Israeli-occupied zone, was killed by a bomb placed in his car in Beirut.

Khalil Mussawi died instantly in the blast, police said. He ran the local Amal branch in the south Lebanese village of Arzun.

In the south, Israeli warplanes fired six missiles at hills and valleys around the south Lebanese village of Yater in a one-hour onslaught, sending a huge black cloud of smoke rising above the area, a Hizbollah stronghold.

At the same time, Israeli artillery gunners based in the occupied zone rained 250 shells on the area around Yater and three other villages lying just north of the zone, security sources said.

There were no immediate reports of casualties in the air raids, which came in retaliation for a string of Hizbollah attacks in the occupied zone.

A Hizbollah spokesman in Beirut said the Israeli onslaught was aimed at freeing soldiers he said were trapped by guerrillas near Yater.

"Israel is trying to get its soldiers out by unleashing this hysterical bombardment," the spokesman said.

The first Hizbollah attack came during the night, when guerrillas fired mortar shells at Israeli troops and SAM-7 rockets at an Israeli helicopter which came to rescue them.

At dawn Saturday, guerril-

las fired mortar shells at army positions at Blat and Rahrah in the "security zone," security sources said.

The sounds of the fighting could be clearly heard by a five-nation committee monitoring the 1996 ceasefire in south Lebanon, which was meeting for the fourth straight day Saturday to discuss violations of the truce accord.

The panel, which groups Israel, Lebanon, the U.S., France and Syria, is discussing 10 complaints from Lebanon and Israel after a week of violence in which 11 civilians have been killed and 47 wounded in south Lebanon and one person injured in northern Israel.

The flare-up began Monday when a roadside bombing killed the teenage son and daughter of a former SLA officer in Jezzine, an SLA-controlled enclave.

The SLA responded by shelling the southern port city of Sidon the same day, killing six civilians and wounding 38 others.

Hizbollah guerrillas then fired more than 50 rockets into northern Israel Tuesday.

The Israeli and Lebanese representatives on the ceasefire committee are disputing blame for the attacks, a source close to the Lebanese delegation said.

The marathon meeting was likely to continue until at least Saturday evening.

The panel is meeting at a U.N. base in the border town of Naqoura, some 20 kilometres from Yater.

Minister injured, driver dies in Beirut car blast

BEIRUT (R) — A bomb exploded in central Beirut Saturday, killing the driver of a Lebanese minister and seriously wounding a military official of the Amal movement, security sources said.

They said the driver of Social Affairs Minister Ayoub Hmayed was killed instantly when a bomb in the trunk of his car blew up as another man, Khalil Mussawi, tried to open a door.

Mr. Mussawi, a south Lebanon military commander of the pro-Syrian Amal movement, was seriously wounded. The sources had earlier identified him as a passerby.

Mr. Hmayed is a senior political official of Amal — the group led by Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri. The Amal movement, Lebanon's mainstream Shiite group, has maintained a military arm in south

Lebanon that frequently attacks Israeli forces occupying the so-called security zone.

Hizbollah, the pro-Iranian group, is the main force fighting the Israeli occupation.

Witnesses said the minister's driver had just arrived from south Lebanon when the bomb exploded as he was exiting the car. He was driving his own car, not the minister's.

Ambulances rushed to the scene in the crowded Khandak Al Ghanniq section of the capital. Firefighters sprayed the destroyed car and police sealed the area to question witnesses.

The blast shattered windows of nearby buildings and sent a chilling reminder to Beirutis of the dark days of the 1975-90 civil war when car bombings and fighting were part of daily life.

Amal statement blames Israel

BEIRUT (R) — Amal blamed Israel for the explosion which killed Khalil Mussawi, an Amal military official who died of his wounds. An Amal official told Reuters that Israel "bears the responsibility for the explosion in the car of Khalil Mussawi." There was no immediate reaction from Israel to Amal's accusations. An Amal statement condemned Israel for the blast and said the group's militiamen would continue attacking Israeli forces and their local militia allies in retaliation.

Palestinians protest Bethlehem siege, clash with Israeli troops

Combined agency dispatches

PROTESTING ISRAEL'S three-week siege of this Biblical city, Palestinians on Saturday threw stones and bottles at Israeli troops who responded with tear gas and rubber bullets.

"The Israeli government should know that we as a nation will never be humiliated," said a 19-year-old stone thrower, his face masked by a white T-shirt. "They will lift the closure or we will burn the ground underneath their feet."

About 60,000 residents of Bethlehem have been barred from leaving their town since two suicide bombers blew themselves up in a Jerusalem market, killing 14 bystanders.

Israel reportedly suspects that the masterminds of the blast, leading figures of the Hamas group, are hiding in Bethlehem, just eight kilometres south of Jerusalem.

Palestinian President Yasser Arafat predicted Saturday that relations with Israel would deteriorate further.

"The worst is yet to come," Mr. Arafat told Palestinian journalists in the West Bank town of Ramallah. In a veiled threat of violence, he said the Palestinians' options were open, but would not say what those options were. "No one reveals their cards," he said.

After the Jerusalem bombing, Israel imposed a blanket closure on the West Bank and Gaza, barring all Palestinians, including 100,000 labourers, from entering Israel. It also enforced an internal closure, preventing Palestinians from leaving their towns and villages.

The internal closure has gradually been lifted, and only the Bethlehem area remains under siege. Last month, Palestinian security forces uncovered a

Hamas bomb factory in the town of Beit Sahour near Bethlehem. There have been conflicting reports in the Israeli media on whether the explosives found in Beit Sahour were of the same type as those used in the market bombing.

In retaliation to the bombing, Israel also withheld millions of dollars in tax refunds it owes the Palestinian National Authority (PNA). It has since released some of the money. However, Israeli leaders were infuriated this week when Mr. Arafat held two days of meetings with opposition groups, including Hamas leaders, in a carefully staged show of Palestinian unity.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu suggested that the remaining funds would not be transferred until Mr. Arafat arrested large numbers of Islamists.

Mr. Arafat on Saturday lashed out at Israel for withholding the money. "This is robbery... why this injustice and humiliation? Because the target is the peace process," Mr. Arafat said.

Mr. Arafat said Israel was punishing the Palestinians without cause, saying he believed the two suicide bombers came from abroad, and not from areas under his control.

Despite Mr. Arafat's tough words, a statement released Friday night, after the weekly Palestinian cabinet meeting, said the security cooperation between Israel, the PNA and the U.S. would continue.

In the Bethlehem protest Saturday, some 300 Palestinians marched from the centre of town to Rachel's Tomb, an Israeli enclave in the city that is guarded by Israeli troops.

Some 150 Palestinians threw stones and empty bottles at the soldiers who fired tear gas and rubber

King orders medical aid to Palestinians

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein on Saturday called upon the concerned authorities to deliver instant medical aid to the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) areas. Minister of Health and Medical Care Ashraf Kurdi made a phonecall to Palestinian President Yasser Arafat to inquire about the PNA's needs.

Carrying signs reading "Israeli terrorism is killing Palestinian people" and "Free our prisoners," the protest was led by 30 members of Fateh, masked with checkered kuffiyehs who also burned an Israeli flag.

Palestinian police wearing gas masks looked on but did not intervene. No injuries were reported.

Bethlehem's acting mayor, Hanna Nasser, who participated in the march, but not in the stone-throwing, said the siege was choking his city which is largely dependent on tourism.

Some tourist buses have been allowed to come in, but individual tourists have been turned away at Israeli army roadblocks.

"We're holding a peaceful demonstration to show resentment for the closure of Bethlehem, our most important Christian city that has been closed for 23 days," business owner Nicholas Kanawati told

Agence France Presse.

The town's Nativity Square at the site where Christians believe Jesus was born was deserted and only a handful of tourists ventured into the area by foot, their buses prevented by Israeli soldiers from passing the checkpoint from Jerusalem.

"Our economy has hit rock bottom," Mr. Kanawati added. "I'm in the souvenir business and since the closure my business is down to five per cent."

A U.S. embassy official said recently that Palestinian income was down 40 per cent since the PNA began to take control of the areas in May 1994.

Also Saturday, some 150,000 students who study at U.N. schools in Palestinian refugee camps in the Gaza Strip, staged a strike to protest a decision by the organisation to charge some tuition (see story on page 2).

Israel to deport Jordanian employed by PNA

FUAD ISMAIL, a Jordanian employed by the Palestinian National Authority as the chief military prosecutor for the Ramallah region, will be deported to Jordan early next week. Mr. Ismail was arrested Wednesday by policemen at the Al-Ram junction roadblock after it was discovered that he had no permit to enter Jerusalem. In addition, the serial number of the gun found in his possession did not match the number written on his weapon permit. During the investigation police discovered that the entry visa stamped on his Jordanian passport was no longer valid. According to police spokesman Shmuel Ben-Ruby, Ismail had renewed his visa several times, but had been in the country for at least 18 months without renewing it. Mr. Ben-Ruby said that Ismail was remanded by Jerusalem Magistrate's Court until Sunday, when a date for his deportation would be set — The Jerusalem Post



CHIEF JUDGE SWORN IN: The newly appointed President of the Higher Court of Justice Farouq Kilani was sworn in Saturday before His Majesty King Hussein at the Royal Court in the presence of His Royal Highness Prince Ra'd Ben Zeid, the Chief Chamberlain, and Minister of Justice Riyad Shakaa. Mr. Kilani was former Chief Justice of the Court of First Instance. He is a graduate of the Cairo University School of Law and has written several books on penal procedures. Mr. Kilani has been in private practice for the last several years.

Yemen to take action to protect tourists — press

SANAA (R) — The Yemeni authorities have decided to introduce new measures to protect tourists after a spate of kidnappings of foreigners that threatened the Arab country's tourist industry, an official newspaper said.

The 26th of September newspaper said officials from the ministries of interior, tourism and culture decided at meetings held in recent days to enforce "stiff punishments" against kidnappers and bolster security measures in tourist attraction areas.

"The meetings were aimed at adopting new measures to protect tourists in Yemen," the weekly newspaper, the official publication of the Yemeni armed forces, wrote in its latest edition which hit the news stands on Thursday night. It gave no further details.

Yemen has blamed foreign-backed saboteurs for a spate of kidnappings of foreigners to sour the country's international relations. Some

officials had said opposition groups receiving Saudi financial help were responsible for the abductions.

Ten Italian tourists were freed last Friday after being abducted by local tribesmen in separate incidents, the latest in a series of abductions in recent years that targeted European tourists, Western diplomats and a Saudi ambassador.

The tribesmen have tried to use hostages as bargaining chips in disputes with the government and foreign oil firms. All hostages have so far been released unharmed.

Cash-strapped Yemen is rich in archaeological sites which attract scores of tourists mainly from Europe. About 75,000 tourists visited Yemen in 1996 generating about \$50 million in revenues.

Yemen, a small independent oil producer, depends heavily on foreign aid mainly from Europe and other Western donors.



A firefighter sprays a car in central Beirut after a bomb exploded in the trunk of the vehicle on Saturday, killing the driver of Lebanon's pro-Syrian social affairs minister and seriously wounding a southern military official of the Shiite Amal militia (Reuters photo)

Iraq completes first section of south-north gas pipeline

BAGHDAD (AFP) — Iraq has completed construction of the first section of a gas pipeline to link its southern and northern fields, Al Jumhuriya newspaper quoted an oil ministry official as saying Saturday.

"We have completed the first phase of the project to connect the centres of production in the south and the north through a gas pipeline," the ministry's research and planning director, Saleh Hassan Al Khayyat, said.

The completed section links the southern Iraqi field of Nassiriya to Musayib, 80 kilometres

south of Baghdad, covering nearly 200 kilometres, he said.

The pipeline will then travel another 300 kilometres to the northern fields, and then be extended to consumption centres such as power and petrochemical plants, he added. "The gas surplus will be exported," he said.

Iraq first drew up a plan for a national gas grid in the 1980s, planning to extend it further to Turkey.

Baghdad and Ankara last year signed a preliminary accord to build a \$2.5 billion gas pipeline to link the northern Iraqi fields to the

Turkish port of Ceyhan, on the Mediterranean.

Iraq's total gas reserves, nearly three quarters of which are associated with oil, are estimated officially at 3.1 trillion cubic metres. They lie in the northeast and the south of the country.

Before the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, in August 1990, Iraq used to export 11.3 millions cubic metres of gas to Kuwait, through a pipeline built in 1987.

Mr. Khayyat said Iraq plans to build a gas export terminal in Khor Al Zubair, on the Gulf, as well as facilities to reinject gas into oil

fields in order to increase their pressure and boost recovery.

Iraq, which has the world's second largest oil reserves after Saudi Arabia, seeks to raise its crude output to six million barrels per day from the current level of 2.5 million b/d.

Baghdad this year signed agreements with Russian oil companies to develop fields in southern Iraq, but they can only be implemented after the lifting of the oil embargo imposed by the U.N. on Iraq since August 1990.



An Iraqi woman buys Syrian made soap Saturday from a street vendor at the Shorja bazaar of Baghdad. Syrian products are popular in this sanction hit country after the U.N. has authorised Iraq to import goods through its border with Syria as part of a deal allowing it to sell limited amount of oil to finance purchase of food and medical supplies. Iraq invited Syria to forge close ties in the face of the growing military cooperation between Israel and Turkey (AFP photo)

Families struggling as Palestinian schools reopen

GAZA (R) — The Palestinian school year began on Saturday with many families struggling to make ends meet under a U.N. money crunch and the economic effects of Israel's border closure.

Israel sealed off the Gaza Strip and the West Bank after a July 30 double suicide bombing at a Jerusalem market which killed two bombers and 14 other people.

The closure means massive disruption of the Palestinian economy, with tens of thousands prevented from going to their jobs in Israel.

Some families have also been knocked by the introduction by the U.N. Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) of a \$14 fee for children studying in its schools.

Parents say the sum is too large a burden for people barred from their jobs.

Popular committees in Palestinian refugee camps

called a boycott of UNRWA schools to protest the fee decision. In Gaza, attendance at UNRWA schools was light.

The Palestinian National Authority (PNA) called for students to attend classes at all schools, while attention was given to the issue, and around 300,000 Palestinian children in the Gaza Strip and 500,000 in the West Bank attended classes.

"We're discussing the matter with (UNRWA Commissioner Peter) Hansen," Palestinian President Yasser Arafat told reporters.

"He's facing a budget deficit, but we've started with him contacting (international) donors to cover up the deficit," UNRWA said it was compelled by a financial crisis "to impose mandatory school donations in the Gaza Strip agency's schools in order to contin-

ue to provide reasonable educational services."

It exempted orphans and severe hardship cases from the fee.

U.N. officials were unavailable for comment on the financial problems on Saturday.

The Palestinian authority has begun a boycott of non-essential Israeli goods in retaliation for the closure, which Israel says it will only lift when Mr. Arafat cracks down on militants.

The authority banned imports of 15 categories of Israeli products including canned goods, fruits and vegetables, juice, biscuits, toilet paper and cigarettes.

Mr. Arafat, whose security officials are cooperating in trilateral talks with their Israeli and U.S. counterparts, has rejected as an unacceptable "dictate" the Israeli demand for mass arrests.

Kuwaiti minister heads to Turkey

KUWAIT CITY (AFP) — Kuwait's commerce and industry minister, Jassem Mudhaf, left for Turkey Saturday heading a trade delegation attending an international fair in Izmir, the Kuwait news agency KUNA said.

Mr. Mudhaf told the official news agency that he will hold talks with his Turkish counterpart and other government officials during his visit to discuss ways of boosting economic links.

This year's fair at Izmir is being held between August 23 and 27, KUNA said.

Kuwait has several economic pacts with Turkey, including agreements aimed at encouraging and protecting investment and avoiding double taxation.

Iraq's Uday invites Syria to forge alliance against Israel and Turkey

BAGHDAD (AFP) — Iraq and Syria should forge closer ties in the face of the growing military cooperation between Israel and Turkey, a newspaper run by President Saddam Hussein's eldest son Uday said Saturday.

"The way things are evolving between Iraq and Syria is positive," said the Babel daily newspaper. "What would be better is the reestablishment of diplomatic ties and cooperation between Iraq and Syria to confront the Israeli-Turkey alliance and Israel's insistence on occupying the

Golan," seized from Syria in 1967. Closer ties between Syria and Iraq "would be beneficial for all Arabs," Babel said.

Arab states have condemned flourishing Israeli-Turkish military ties, which they believe is targeted at Syria. Meanwhile, a 12-member Syrian trade delegation began meeting Iraqi company executives and trade ministry officials on Saturday to clinch a wheat export contract to Iraq, a government spokesman in Baghdad said.

The delegation, led by the director of the Syrian union

of chambers of commerce Mohammad Malki, discussed bilateral cooperation with Iraqi Trade Minister Mohammed Mahdi Saleh.

Mr. Saleh told reporters that Iraq has recently signed a deal with Syria to import foodstuff via the Syrian Mediterranean port of Tartus, in the north.

The U.N. has authorised Iraq to import goods through its border with Syria as part of a deal allowing it to sell limited amounts of oil to finance purchases of food and medical supplies.

Iraq and Syria, ruled by rival branches of the Baath Arab Socialist Party, broke off ties in 1980 and closed their border two years later.

However, relations warmed in the past three months after Syrian businessmen travelled to Baghdad to break the ice.

The two countries have also signed contracts with each other for the first time since 1980. The Iraqi-Syrian border reopened in June to businessmen. Traders and industrialists from the two countries have since exchanged several visits.

Israel, Croatia establish ties

From The Jerusalem Post

AFTER HOLDING secret talks in Budapest, Israel and Croatia have announced Thursday the establishment of diplomatic ties.

In its statement issued Thursday Croatia apologised "for crimes committed against the Jewish people during the Nazi period" and by the Croatian regime at that time.

"Fascism, racial hatred, xenophobia and anti-Semitism are abhorrent and are condemned by the democratic government and people of the Republic of Croatia," added the statement, signed by Hrvolje Sarinic, head of the Office of the President of the Republic of Croatia.

Israel was represented by Eitan Bentsur, the Foreign Ministry's director-general. He expressed "great interest" in Croatia's achievement of independence in addition to "the importance which the people of Croatia today attach to values of freedom and democracy."

Croatia's President Franjo Tudjman also plans a visit to Israel to apologise personally for crimes perpe-

trated by some of his people during the Holocaust, the Foreign Ministry said.

Several months back Israel was cool to Zagreb's feelers for forging ties after Tudjman published a book called "Horrors of War" which contained quotes deemed anti-Semitic.

A revised edition has been published omitting the offensive passages, Croatia's statement said.

Tudjman has expressed interest in building close cooperation with Israel in the fields of defence and industry.

from the Egyptian tourist spot of Taba, just across the border, the radio said.

He stopped his drive north to pick up the hitchhiking couple in Eilat. Hunter got in the front seat. Gibb went to the back.

Okeve said that when he pulled over for a rest stop later in Israel's southern desert, he and Hunter first got out and had a cigarette. Gibb joined them later.

Okeve described the night sky to the two, discussing the big dipper constellation.

At this stage in the reenactment, Okeve suddenly went to the car and returned with a toy gun, the radio said. He pretended to shoot two policemen who were playing Gibb and Hunter's roles.

"I know that there were shots, the gun was in my

Israeli army reserve officer reenacts killing of British tourist

TEL AVIV (R) — An Israeli army reserve major Saturday reenacted the killing of a British tourist and the wounding of the man's girlfriend in front of police cameras.

Israeli Danny Okeve, 45, confessed Friday that he killed Jeffrey Hunter, 22, and wounded his girlfriend Charlotte Gibb, 20, on August 13 in Israel's southern desert, police said.

Okeve could give no motive, saying he might have a split personality.

During Saturday's reenactment, an Israeli Radio reporter who witnessed it quoted Okeve as saying he was discussing the stars in the night sky when he suddenly shot the two.

Okeve said that on August 13 he had come to Israel's Red Sea resort town of Eilat

hand, I know that there was shooting and I know that I hit them because they fell down," the radio reporter quoted Okeve as saying.

"I don't remember how many shots were fired but I remember after the shooting that I stood with the gun in my hand and I looked at myself. I know that I shot them because there was no one else there other than myself."

Okeve told reporters at court Friday, "I really don't know what happened... Maybe I need a doctor for split personalities. I really don't know how to explain myself, after I saw them lying there then I realised what happened."

Hunter's father, Norman, said he learned of Friday's arrest while visiting Gibb who is recovering at hospi-

tal in Cambridge.

"I'm just pleased that they've got him. They worked very quickly," Hunter told Israel's army radio Friday.

"My wife said just feel sorry for him. He can't even explain himself why he did it, so it's something very, very sad. It's very sad that something has gone wrong with his mind and he's just done something that he can't explain," Mr. Hunter said.

Gibb, a student from Peterborough in eastern England, told reporters after the shooting: "We were just having a cigarette outside the car, during a rest from the journey, and then I just saw lots of flashes and he'd shot us. There was silence, we weren't really speaking, and then I just

saw the light."

Minutes after the shooting, soldiers found Gibb beside the road and administered first aid. Hunter, a law student from Surrey south of London, died instantly.

Police said their first break in the case came Monday when an officer who had manned one of the roadblocks set up after the shooting remembered seeing a Peugeot 309 that belonged to Okeve, who worked for a transport company.

They said a gun registered to Okeve fitted the murder weapon and that one of Hunter's fingerprints was found in his vehicle. Police arrested Okeve at his hometown of Even Yehuda in central Israel Friday morning.

The intended target of new Israeli Press and Publication Law, a bourgeois weekly press, is to be throwing one who came into force.

Knowledge, all papers have a right to publish, and we have not failed to be an unabashed situation," said President Association Self Sheriff.

ments to the press law, introduced a series of financial requirements for new papers and imposed several strict reporting in the Kingdom.

newly believed that daily newspaper problem accommodation.

up from JD50,000, most of the industry expected the after being unable to procure minimum capital required by the weekly newspapers appear in the press. Sources from the industry affirmed that legal man the weeklies to stay afloat.

new amendments.

the government made the law, in some of their articles.

Al Saheel, the Islamist, as far as the capital requirement, didn't specify that [the cap] be in cash, and that's how he saved himself, drawing on extensive from both the Muslim Brotherhood party, the Islamic Action, putting its house in a

Study have JD200,000 paid according to the company, we have to about the rest."

that the law was intended to

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15:00Energy Express
16:00American Chart Show
18:00French Programmes
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19:30News Headlines
19:35Fresh Prince of Belair
20:00Cinema, Cinema, Cinema
20:30National Geographic
21:10Renegade
22:00News in English
22:30One West Waikiki
23:15Sisters

PRAYER TIMES

04:38Fajr
06:00(Sunrise) Duha
12:38Dhuhr
16:16Asr
19:16Maghreb
20:38Isha

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WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology
Moderate summer weather conditions will prevail with winds north-westerly moderate. In Agaba, it will be hot, winds northerly moderate, and seas calm.

Min/Max. temp.

Amman19/31
Agaba25/39
Deserts17/34
Jordan Valley24/28

Yesterday's high temperatures:

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Amman 32, Aqaba 41 Humidity readings: Amman 27 per cent, Aqaba 26 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY
AMMAN:
Dr. Tawfiq Qub'ain623029
Dr. Ghaleb Zawaideh736011
Dr. Hisham Kan'an790286
Dr. Khalidoun Asfour699440
Firas pharmacy661912
Feedows pharmacy778336
Al Asema pharmacy637055
Naioukh pharmacy623672
Al Salam pharmacy636730
Yacoub pharmacy644945
Shmeisani pharmacy637660
Najib pharmacy847632
IRBID:
Dr. Mazen Abu Bakir276852
Al Quds pharmacy(---)
ZARQA:
Dr. Akram Haddad985550
Khalifeh pharmacy985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre637111
Civil Defence Department661111
Civil Defence Immediate Rescue630341

Civil Defence Emergency199
Rescue Police02.621111.637777
Fire Brigade617101
Blood Bank775121
Highway Police843402
Traffic Police896390
Public Security Dept.630321
Hotel Complaints605800
Price Complaints661176
Water & Sewerage Complaints897467
Arman Municipality Complaints787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance)121
Overseas Calls010230
Central Amman Telephone Repairs623101
Abdali Tel. Repairs661101
Jordan Television773111
Radio Jordan774111
Water Authority680100
J. Electricity Authority815615
Electric Power Co.636381
RJ Flight Information08-53200
Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Husseini Medical Centre81381/332
Khalidi Maternity64281/6
Akileh Maternity643441/2
Jabal Amman Maternity642362
Malhas, J. Amman636140
Palestine, Shmeisani607071
Shmeisani Hospital669131
University Hospital845845

Al-Muasher Hospital6672279
The Islamic, Abdali666126/37
Al-Ahli, Abdali664164/6
Italian, Al-Muhajreen777101/3
Al-Bashir775111/2/6
Army, Marka891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital602240/50
Amal Hospital674155
The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery865199
ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital(09)983323
Zarqa National Hospital(09)900560
Ibn Sina Hospital(09)986732
Al Hikma Modern Hospital(09)990990
IRBID:
Princess Basma Hospital021275555
Greek Catholic Hospital021272275
Ibn Al Nafees Hospital021274100
AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital031314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia Inter-

national Airport Tel. (08)53200-5, where it should always be verified. Information on other flights can be supplied on phone 08 (52700)

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights
09:30Jeddah (RJ)
10:05Bombay (RJ)
10:05Dhahran, Riyadh (RJ)
10:15Lamaca (RJ)
10:20Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
10:25Beirut (RJ)
10:45Doha, Bahrain (RJ)
17:05Amsterdam, Brussels (RJ)
17:40New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
18:05Paris (RJ)
18:50London (RJ)
19:05Ankara, Istanbul (RJ)
19:10Madrid, Geneva (RJ)
19:10Athens (RJ)
20:40Vienna (RJ)
20:40Rome (RJ)
20:55Detroit, Chicago, Amsterdam (RJ)
21:45Frankfurt (RJ)
01:05Cairo (RJ)
01:55Beirut (add) (RJ)

Other Flights

11:35Kuwait (add) (KU)
12:00Sanaa (IY)
12:00Jeddah (SV)
13:35Bahrain (GF)
14:30Al 'Arish (PF)

15:20Moscow (SU)
21:10Beirut (ME)
21:35Cairo (MS)
23:20Istanbul (TK)
00:59Cairo (MS)
02:15London (BA)
07:20London (BA)
07:20Tel Aviv (LY)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights
06:00Madrid (RJ)
06:45Beirut (RJ)
07:00Lamaca (RJ)
12:00Frankfurt (RJ)
12:10Tunis, Casablanca (RJ)
12:15Ankara, Istanbul (RJ)
12:15Vienna (RJ)
12:30Rome (RJ)
12:40Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
13:20Athens (RJ)
13:25London (RJ)
20:55Lamaca (add) (RJ)
21:00New Delhi (RJ)
21:10Cairo (RJ)
21:30Beirut (add) (RJ)

Other Flights

07:00Beirut (ME)
07:55London (BA)
12:35Kuwait (add) (KU)
13:00Sanaa (IY)
13:30Jeddah (SV)
14:25Doha (GF)
15:30Al 'Arish (PF)
16:35Moscow (SU)
22:25Cairo (MS)
00:45Amsterdam (KL)
02:00Cairo (MS)
07:00Beirut (ME)
07:55London (BA)
08:15Tel Aviv (LY)

Royal Wings (RW)

07:45 Amman (Marka Airport) (RW)
09:15Aqaba (RW)
10:30Amman (QAIA) (RW)
17:45 Amman (Marka Airport) (RW)
18:55Tel Aviv (RW)
21:30Amman (QAIA) (RW)
22:50Aqaba (RW)

Home

Jordan rejects UNRWA se

The Jordanian government has rejected any role for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) in its fields of operations and urged donor countries to contribute more to the agency's \$26 million budget for the 1997-1998 fiscal year.

The Jordanian views of the Department of Palestinian Affairs, a Jordanian does not see a reduction of any UNRWA services and to replace any additional services on the Palestinian who continues to be difficult living conditions.

Apparatus media reports that a plan to launch a new UNRWA office in Jordan is being rejected by the Jordanian government. The plan was to establish a new office in Amman to coordinate the agency's activities in the country. The Jordanian government has rejected the plan, stating that the UNRWA's role in Jordan is already well-defined and that the agency's budget is already being met by donor countries.

The Jordanian government has also rejected the UNRWA's plan to launch a new office in Amman to coordinate the agency's activities in the country. The plan was to establish a new office in Amman to coordinate the agency's activities in the country. The Jordanian government has rejected the plan, stating that the UNRWA's role in Jordan is already well-defined and that the agency's budget is already being met by donor countries.

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Jordan rejects proposed reductions in UNRWA services — Tarshihi

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Kingdom of Jordan Saturday said it rejects any reduction of the social, health, and educational services offered to refugees by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) in its fields of operations and urged donor nations to contribute more to help meet the agency's estimated \$26 million deficit for the 1997 fiscal year.

Voicing Jordan's views, Mr. Ibrahim Tarshihi, director general of the Department of Palestinian Affairs, said that "Jordan does not accept any reduction of any of UNRWA's services and refuses to place any additional burdens on the Palestinian refugees who continue to face very difficult living conditions."

Mr. Tarshihi was commenting on media reports that UNRWA plans to impose tuition fees on refugee children in Gaza and possibly fees on other services for Palestinians in its five fields of operations, which include Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, the West Bank, and the Gaza Strip.

"The Jordanian government intends to coordinate with the other Arab states hosting refugees on this issue and to raise this question during the scheduled Sept. 9 meeting in Amman by representatives of the host countries and the



Ibrahim Tarshihi

donor nations which provide financial assistance to UNRWA in order to ensure that the agency does not make any cuts in its services," Mr. Tarshihi was quoted as saying by the Jordan News Agency, Petra.

Appealing to the donor nations to fulfill their commitments and help meet the deficit in UNRWA's budget, Mr. Tarshihi said the agency has already notified Jordan and the other host countries about its intention to cut services so that it can pursue its main operations until the end of 1997.

According to Mr. Tarshihi, the cuts could include freezing the appointment of 249 teachers at its schools, making reductions in health services, and reducing the international staff by 15 per cent, a measure to which

the Arab host countries do not object because of the staff's high salaries which they feel would better serve the refugees.

The Sept. 9 meeting in Amman is being organized to discuss recent developments in the agency's endeavour to eliminate the present deficit.

The meeting will be a follow-up to one held last June, during which donors contributed \$4.1 million to UNRWA's 1997 \$352 million budget.

UNRWA Commissioner General Peter Hansen last week met Palestinian President Yasser Arafat in Gaza and told him that UNRWA is compelled to introduce cuts and reductions for the last quarter of 1997 due to the lack of funds.

For its part, UNRWA said Saturday that it has not yet received definite instructions by Mr. Hansen to impose any fees on refugee children's education in the coming year, stating that the schools are only collecting contributions from the students for the maintenance of services.

UNRWA sources said that preparations have been completed for the start of the 1997-1998 school year.

Minister says election participation dialogue to continue next week

AMMAN (J.T.) — The dialogue between the government and opposition political parties is continuing as the two sides have agreed to resume meetings next week, according to Minister of State for Information Affairs Samir Mutawi Saturday.

Speaking after the regular Cabinet session, Dr. Mutawi told reporters that the dialogue will be open and free to be attended by the various parties.

The government has so far concluded two meetings within the dialogue, but according to the head of the Muslim Brotherhood group, Abdul Majid Thuneibat, although last Tuesday's meeting did not produce any definite agreements, the government has given assurances that there will be no preconditions to the dialogue and that all issues are open for discussion.

A local press report Saturday quoted Munir Sharaiba, a spokesperson for the Jordan Democratic People's Unity Party, as saying Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali will today meet representatives of the Arab Ba'ath Socialist Party, the Communist Party, the Ba'ath Progressive Party, the Jordan Democratic People's Unity Party, and the Arab Land Party.

Quoted by the daily Al Arab Al Yawm, the spokesperson said the five parties will submit a nine-point list of demands to the prime minister as a condition of their participation in the general elections and will participate if their demands are met.

Not included in their demands was the scrapping of the one-person, one-vote election system, though they demanded that the

government work out a modern election law to be approved by Parliament.

In reply to a question by reporters about contacts between Israel and Jordan concerning international flights via the Aqaba airport, Dr. Mutawi said "we will not take any measures that might infringe on our sovereignty."

Last Wednesday Civil Aviation Authority Director General Jasser Zayyad was quoted as saying some international flights to the Israeli resort of Eilat will be diverted to Aqaba airport beginning next month, ahead of a joint airport agreement.

Mr. Zayyad told Agence France Presse that technical delegations from Jordan and Israel decided to "transfer some flights en route to Israel's Eilat airport to the Aqaba airport starting in September. But this

pilot project is a transitional phase until a final agreement on creating a joint airport at Aqaba is concluded."

In reply to a question regarding the stalled peace talks, Dr. Mutawi said "Jordan supports any efforts that lead to the resumption of the Israeli-Palestinian negotiations in a comprehensive manner rather than to deal with particular issues alone."

According to Dr. Mutawi, the Cabinet approved the following during Saturday's regular session:

1- Permission for the Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment to organize a special conference between Sept. 15 and 17 on safeguarding the national architectural heritage.

2- Creation of a Jordanian delegation, led by Director General of the Housing and

Urban Development Corporation Youssef Hyasat, to attend an Arab ministers housing and reconstruction council meeting in Cairo on Sept. 9 and 10.

3- Formation of a Jordanian delegation, led by Minister of Transport and Telecommunications Basam Saket, to attend an international telecommunications conference to be held in Geneva between Sept. 8 and 14, and

4- Permission to attend the Jordanian-Yemeni and Jordanian-Sudanese higher joint committee meetings. The delegation will be led by Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali and will include the ministers of Industry, Trade and Supply, Health, Education and Higher Education, Labour, Agriculture, Awaqaf and Islamic Affairs, and the Minister of State for Information Affairs.

AMPCO increases profits

AMMAN (Petra) — The government-owned Agricultural Marketing and Processing Company (AMPCO) last year exported \$56 million worth of tomatoes to European and Arab countries and expects to increase this year's exports to \$60 million, according to company General Director Khaloud Nasser.

AMPCO, established in 1983, is considered the foremost company in the Middle East in processing tomato paste, with a daily capacity of 2500 tonnes, Mr. Nasser stated.

Jordan has three tomato processing plants, of which two are state-owned, while

the third is privately-owned and managed, he noted.

He said the company encourages tomato growers, whose primary concern is the high cost of inputs, to increase output by paying well for their produce, adding that the three processing plants can absorb any amount of tomatoes sent by local producers.

Farmers are dissuaded from borrowing whenever possible in order to reduce their financial burdens, he commented.

AMPCO, which has a JD 15.9 million capital, turns a small profit which is used to cover preventable expenses, concluded Mr. Nasser.

Engineers complete digging of Wadi Haddadeh-downtown tunnel

AMMAN (J.T.) — Amman Municipality Saturday completed digging of a 180-metre tunnel connecting the Wadi Haddadeh district with downtown Amman, marking the occasion with an event held at the site attended by Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali, Amman Mayor Mamdouh Abbadi, and other officials.

Dr. Abbadi spoke about the different construction phases of the tunnel, located within a hill, explaining that this eagerly anticipated improvement would ease traffic congestion in the downtown area.

"Today we have completed the digging of the first tunnel inside a mountain linking Wadi Haddadeh district with downtown Amman area and we hope that the tunnel and the roads extending outside it will be completed in two months time," he added.

The total cost of the project, which is being imple-



Mamdouh Abbadi

mented by an Italian firm, is expected to be between JD3 to JD4 million, and includes the excavation and the overhead bridge connecting the road near the courthouse with the tunnel, he remarked.

Last June Amman Municipality inaugurated two tunnels, constructed over a period of 135 days at a cost of JD 15 million, at the Third Circle in Jabal

Amman. The Wadi Haddadeh tunnel will play a major role in solving traffic problems within Amman, allowing vehicles heading from northern Amman toward Abdali district to bypass the downtown area, thereby reducing the present traffic congestion there. Dr. Abbadi's statement said.

The municipality has plans to construct other tunnels in the Amman area utilising the municipality staff of engineers and technicians, who have acquired a great deal of experience which will enable them to carry out future projects independently. Dr. Abbadi announced.

Among the audience attending the ceremony were the Ministers of Industry, Trade, and Supply, Interior, Tourism and Antiquities, Culture and Youth, as well as the general manager of the Italian company.

Entrepreneurs, EU to discuss economic partnership impact

AMMAN (J.T.) — The European Union (EU) has agreed to provide a JD 40,000 grant to the Jordanian Businessmen's Association (JBA) to help finance a joint seminar in November concerning the impact of the EU-Jordanian partnership agreement on the Jordanian economy, a JBA statement announced Saturday.

The seminar is timely due to the expected profound changes in the Middle East, which is witnessing socio-economic developments affecting trade and investment. Saturday's announcement stated.

The European-Middle Eastern Free Trade Zone, a conglomeration of EU and

Middle Eastern nations, is expected to be in place by the year 2010, and by 2025 encompass 40 countries comprising nearly a billion inhabitants, the statement read.

"In view of these expectations and as Jordan and the EU have already initiated the partnership agreement, the JBA came to an agreement with the EU office in Amman on organising the seminar which will be attended by representatives of the private economic sector to discuss the impact of the EU-Jordanian partnership agreement on Jordan's economy, the challenges it entails and the opportunities it offers," the statement con-

tinued.

The three-day seminar, involving experts from the EU, countries such as Morocco and Tunisia which have already signed similar agreements, Jordanian experts in various sectors, and JBA members, aims to orient Jordanian businesses on applying the partnership accord and how Jordan can benefit from the deal, it said.

The expected JD 60,000 overall cost of the seminar, including the accommodation of the invited experts, will be offset by the EU grant, with the JBA covering the balance, it concluded.

NEWS IN BRIEF

University acceptances to be announced

AMMAN (Petra) — Head of the Committee for Admission at Jordanian Universities Walid Ma'ani Saturday said the final list of students admitted at public universities would be published Thursday. Dr. Ma'ani said the minimum average for acceptance is not fixed yet.

Local products to be displayed in Damascus

AMMAN (Petra) — Thirty-four local companies will take part in the Damascus International Exhibition to be opened Aug. 28. Another products exhibit is planned in Italy.

Weeklies use creative strategies to abide by law

By Amy Henderson
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The intended target of new amendments to the 1993 Press and Publications Law — the country's boisterous weekly press industry — still seems to be thriving one week after amendments came into force.

"To my knowledge, all papers have submitted their [financial] papers, and we haven't heard that any paper has failed to or been unable to correct its financial situation," said President of the Jordan Press Association Seif Sherif.

Amendments to the press law, introduced in mid-May, prescribe a series of financial and administrative requirements for newspapers, exact rigorous penalties on those in violation of the press law, and impose several strict restrictions on news reporting in the Kingdom.

While many believed that daily newspapers would have little problem accommodating new capital requirements prescribed by the law (JD600,000, up from JD50,000), most observers of the media industry expected the weeklies, with small capital and limited resources, to close their doors after being unable to produce the JD300,000 minimum capital required by the law.

However, weekly newspapers appear to have one-upped the government in the battle for the country's free press. Sources from the weekly industry have affirmed that legal manoeuvring has allowed the weeklies to stay afloat, for the time being, owing to what many call a "loophole" in the new amendments.

"When the government made the law, it wasn't very specific in some of their articles," says a source from Al Sabeel, the Islamist weekly paper. "As far as the capital requirement is concerned, they didn't specify that [the capital] had to be JD300,000 in cash, and that's how many papers got around it."

Al Sabeel itself, drawing on extensive financial resources from both the Muslim Brotherhood and the Islamist party, the Islamic Action Front, had little trouble putting its house in order, he says.

"We already have JD200,000 paid up," he explains, "and according to the companies law, as a shareholder company, we have two more years to deposit the rest."

"It seems that the law was intended to force a

paid-up capital [from the weeklies]," says Musa Kilani, chief editor of Al Urdan weekly. "But the amendments did not specify whether this capital must be paid up or registered capital."

Mr. Kilani, the sole proprietor of Al Urdan, says that his paper, for example, had a paid-up capital of JD30,000 in 1995, which was later raised to JD90,000 and never registered because, according to the companies law under which the paper is registered, it was not required.

"So, [Al Urdan] has simply raised its registered capital, which requires us to pay a certain percentage for registration fees — which amounted to something like JD30 — and according to the companies law, this is legal," he says.

Other weekly papers with single owners have followed suit, such as Al Liwa' and the English-language Star, and several weeklies with more than one owner have sold their licences to individuals within the papers, re-registered these institutions with little or no paid-up capital, and reconciled differences with the press law in registered capital.

A source at the Ministry of Trade and Industry, working on the weekly papers' file, was unable to say how many papers have rectified their financial situation by boosting registered capital, but Mr. Kilani says he believes that as many as 17 of approximately 25 weekly papers have exploited the discrepancy in the press and companies law.

Still others have managed to raise their paid up capital by establishing partnerships with other weeklies or by attracting more investors.

Al Bilad, for example, recently entered into partnership with Al Hayat after it closed, and absorbed Al Sayyad, another paper under the Al Bilad umbrella. Both will be published as a supplement to the paper. A source at Al Bilad has confirmed that the management of the paper has formed a new, limited liability company with a paid-up capital of JD550,000.

Last weekend, Minister of State for Information Affairs Samir Mutawi said that a "committee of experts is currently examining [the papers'] relevant documents, and that papers would soon be informed as to whether or not they have acted within the parameters of the law."

"I am sure," says the source from Al Sabeel, "that the government is not satisfied by this, and I am sure they were taken a bit by surprise."

Mr. Sherif, however, asserts that regardless of whether or not the government is satisfied, the papers have acted legally and in compliance with the law.

"The applicable law is now the companies law," he says, "which does not require cash in the bank. So no one has the right to force the papers to pay this money."

Journalists are wary of the government's intentions, and say that should the papers overcome the challenge of the capital requirement, the government still has considerable leeway to crack down on the press.

"We expect the government to manipulate the situation through the clause that address the requirements for chief editors," he says. Amendments state that chief editors be "a Jordanian with actual and permanent residence in the Kingdom" and be a "totally dedicated journalist as his sole occupation or a fully committed job in journalism with ten years experience in both cases."

"Many papers, have experience abroad, or in the Gulf — maybe the government will not consider this experience as applicable," he says.

Congruent to the capital requirements, papers still confront the possibility of incurring substantial financial penalties for violations of the press law, any accumulation of which could be nearly as costly as the capital requirement.

The law now levies fines ranging from JD30,000-50,000 on those in violation of the loosely-worded law. Already, the prospect of sustaining such penalties has already forced at least one weekly out of business. The weekly political satirical paper Abed Rabbo stopped its press in mid-June, two months before the law became active on 15 August.

The owners of that paper, also owners of Jordan's first weekly, Shihani, reputed for its "bulldozing" reputation in exposing corruption and scandal, and the latest Arabic daily, Al Arab Al Yawm, asserted that finding the requisite capital was not an issue, but the fact that the new law did not provide any degree of latitude for satire and consequently exposed it to the possibility of incurring exorbitant penalties.

"So, I do consider this a victory, a good thing, for journalists," says one editor who requested anonymity. "But the government still has the upper hand. This is one battle, but they can still win [the war] through the fines."

Ministry of information plans major restructuring projects — Mutawi

By Hind-Lara Mango
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — There are no plans to abolish the Ministry of Information, but major restructuring projects are under way, said Minister of State for Information Affairs, Dr. Samir Mutawi.

"I think the question of abolishing the ministry is fairly premature. But we are studying the ministry's requirements and expectations for the next few years," he told the Jordan Times.

Dr. Mutawi added that this department will determine the relevance of sustaining this ministry, and the feasibility of other departments, such as the Press and Publication Department, taking on some of the ministry's responsibilities.

However, the ministry essentially needs major restructuring, including the latest technological advances in the field of communication and telecommunication, in order to face the twenty first century, Dr. Mutawi pointed out.

According to the minister, staff working in media departments, particularly in broadcasting and television, are presently being rehabilitated and trained to employ modern technology.

Restructuring has already commenced at the Ministry of Information with the creation of two new departments.

"One is the Internet and reports department. We are working on a web site in order to show Jordan to the world every morning," disclosed the minister.

He added that this department, including an international media relations section, would not only deal with news, but with reports, situation reports, and all related matter of interest to others who want to know more about Jordan.

Another division will be what Dr. Mutawi terms the Central Information of Ministries, which will function as a central bureau to handle media coverage on various ministries.

"This will include information about the policies, plans, and development programmes of each ministry," Dr. Mutawi elaborated.

The minister revealed that a fast service system, designed for journalists wishing to ask specific questions about the functions of ministries or some of the developments taking place, will be incorporated in this department.

"Some of the common complaints we receive at the ministry [pertain] to the difficulties faced by journalists in trying to find answers to their questions," Dr. Mutawi said.

"We want to provide a telephone and fax service so that anyone can query any government official through this office."

This department, similar to information bureaus in the U.S. and in England, would be limited to Jordanian ministries and departments.

The Jordanian Visitor's Information Bureau is the second major department in the making.

It entails establishing an information office at every

cross point into the Kingdom "for example, the Queen Alia International Airport, [and] cross points between Jordan, Syria, Egypt, Israel, and Saudi Arabia," Dr. Mutawi noted.

He added "in our initial meetings at the Ministry of Information, we discussed cooperation with representatives from the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, Health, Culture, Royal Jordanian Airlines, the Civil Aviation Authority, and so on..."

The minister hoped that by the time the formation of this department was concluded, the ministry would be able to recruit people from these ministries, chiefly from radio and television.

Staff training would include computers in order to provide computer data for staff working at these points.

Initially, the Ministry of Information thought this project would be fairly easy to establish, but "when we hired 20 people for the first stage, we found them computer illiterate," Dr. Mutawi related.

"So, these people have to now be trained in handling information and data on a computer, and to [disseminate] information."

"We now know that new job specifications have to be put down for the employees working at this department."

These departments are essential to the field of information and therefore will be the raison d'être for the maintenance of the Ministry of Information, said Dr. Mutawi.



Cambodian government soldiers carry a wounded comrade injured during frontline fighting near O'Smach in northern Cambodia. Government troops under the command of powerful Second Prime Minister Hun Sen are fighting for full control over O'Smach, the last town held by retreating royalists of ousted First Prime Minister Prince Norodom Ranariddh, who Mr. Hun Sen overthrew last month (Reuters photo)

Long delayed repairs finally to get under way on Mir

MOSCOW (AP) — The crew of the battered Russian space station headed into the unknown Friday, attempting critical repair work in an airless, ruptured capsule that could determine how much longer Mir stays in orbit.

The station's two Russian cosmonauts were to open the hatch to the damaged Spektr module and try to restore the station's depleted power supply. Such difficult and potentially dangerous repair work has never been done before.

President Boris Yeltsin urged Russians Friday to honour the Mir crew and appreciate the huge challenges cosmonauts face. Many Russians, weary from the country's seemingly unending political and economic crisis, have shown little interest in Mir as its crew has battled a chain of accidents and mishaps in recent months.

"Perhaps we have forgotten that space is not a propaganda show. Space is first of all a hard and dangerous job with the greatest responsibilities," he said in his weekly radio address.

Spektr was rammed and punctured during a June 25 collision with a cargo ship, forcing the crew to seal it off, disconnecting cables that attached its solar panels to the rest of the station. Since then, Mir has only had about half of its normal power.

If the repair is successful, three of Spektr's four panels will come back on line. Russians say the Mir will be back at 90 per cent of its power but NASA estimates it at about 60 per cent.

The repairs are expected to last a little over four hours, but the crew will

need 11 hours getting ready: eating breakfast, taking medical tests, and finally suiting up in the bulky, pressurised space suits that will protect them from the vacuum inside the Spektr module.

Once in their suits, the cosmonauts will seal off the passageway leading to the depressurised Spektr, open the hatch and take their first look inside.

They are not certain what they may find, but the interior is likely to pose hazards. Broken equipment or shards of glass from ruptured containers could tear a spacesuit. A cosmonaut could become entangled in loose cables or even his own lifeline.

Russian space officials said Thursday that Pavel Vinogradov, a rookie cosmonaut and the mission's flight engineer, will be the one to enter the Spektr. He will work to reconnect 11 cables to the Spektr side of the hatch, while Mission Commander Anatoly Solov'yov assists from the hatchway and reattaches power lines on the other side, perhaps an even more difficult task.

"They are going to make the connections with gloves," Igor Goncharov, a deputy mission control chief, said Thursday. "If they find it tricky to do it with bulky gloves, they have special tools to help. The crew trained to do it both ways on the ground."

The third member of the Mir crew, American Astronaut Michael Foale, will be stationed in the Soyuz escape capsule to assist in case of trouble.

If they have time, the cosmonauts will also film the interior of Spektr and col-

lect logbooks, computer disks and personal items belonging to Mr. Foale, who had worked in the module before the June collision.

Altogether, space officials expect the repair mission to last a little over four hours, ending shortly after 1300 GMT. But the team can stay longer if they like. However they will have about seven hours' supply of oxygen.

Mr. Yeltsin again blamed the last crew of Mir for the June collision when a supply ship rammed the Spektr module during a docking exercise, saying it could jeopardise the space programme.

"Because of the result of a minor mistake made by cosmonauts, the work of many years of thousands of scientists, technicians and workers may vanish."

But he played down the incident, citing the extreme conditions in space. "If they sometimes make mistakes, it's understandable. Work in extreme situations and the constant stresses tells on them," he said.

The crew spent Thursday rereading instruction manuals and clearing away equipment blocking doors to other modules. Those doors, which open onto the same docking port as the Spektr, will have to be sealed during the repair to keep other parts of the station from losing air pressure.

Russian officials expressed confidence that the team was more than prepared for anything they might encounter.

"We have tried to simulate all possible difficulties during training on the ground," Mr. Goncharov said. "The crew is ready."

Italian government draws fire over reprieve for Albanians

ROME (AP) — A government decision to put off the repatriation of Albanian migrants has drawn opposition fire at a time when several crimes by foreigners have provoked headlines.

Interior Minister Giorgio Napolitano repeated on Rai state radio Saturday that the 10,000 Albanians would probably have another two months to stay in Italy. The cabinet would meet in the coming weeks to decide, he said.

Aug. 31 was the deadline for them to leave. Some 17,000 Albanians have crossed the Adriatic Sea this year to Italy, mostly in February and March during a wave of unrest in their homeland. Most were granted temporary stays.

The Italian and Albanian governments have said they want to cooperate in the repatriation. But Albanian officials said Friday that it was unlikely the country would be stable enough to accept the 10,000 migrants by Oct. 31.

Members of the centre-right opposition to Premier Romano Prodi's government, the Liberty Alliance, called for a parliamentary debate on the issue. A party statement said the government had "surrendered" on the repatriation.

At the same time, some commentators and politicians have warned against a backlash against immigrants after several recent crimes, including a sexual assault on an Italian girl by a Moroccan immigrant.

In the latest case, a Macedonian shepherd has confessed to raping and killing an Italian woman and fatally shooting her friend Wednesday while the two were hiking in the mountains east of Rome, police say.

Reports said the suspect, Alyebi Hasani, had been in Italy for five years and had a previous conviction for theft. It was unclear whether he had legal status or not.

Gian Enrico Rusconi, a commentator in the Turin daily La Stampa, wrote Saturday that the double murder case, the Albanians and the overall immigrant situation in Italy had to be considered separately.

"But beyond the necessity of making these distinctions and repeating sacrosanct, and equally vain, general principles about the rights and duties of immigrants, discomfort among the citizens is growing and the government is losing credibility," he said.

Cambodian royalists push rivals back from last bastion

CHONG CHOM (AFP) — Troops loyal to Cambodia's exiled first premier Saturday followed up territorial gains with an artillery barrage aimed at forces of strongman Co-Prime Minister Hun Sen, witnesses said.

Mr. Hun Sen's troops moved artillery pieces back around five kilometres from where they had pounded ridges on the outskirts of the royalists' last bastion of Cambodian territory, opposite here in O Smach.

"There was heavy shelling last night, but small arms fire has given way to outgoing artillery rounds as royalists pressed on yesterday's gains," a witness told AFP Saturday.

Artillery lines of royalist FUNCINPEC Party forces loyal to exiled First Prime Minister Prince Norodom Ranariddh were moved a kilometre or two into Cambodia from positions that had nearly backed up on the Thai border.

However, a number of incoming shells landed some 300 metres from the border, and a member of royalist commander, General Nheik Bun Chhay's entourage was severely injured in an explosion about two kilometres away.

He was rushed to Thailand for treatment after a shell appeared to have blown away part of his face, reporters at the border crossing said. There was no immediate report on the injured man's condition.

Meanwhile, Khmer Rouge fighters joined royalist soldiers in O Smach in apparently combined platoons rotating forward to the frontlines in what was otherwise a quiet day, AFP witnesses said.

Thai military sources have said some 2,000 royalist soldiers in O Smach facing Mr. Hun Sen's troops were being supported by 600-700 Khmer Rouge fighters.

Nheik Bun Chhay denied in an interview with French radio late Friday that royalist and rebel troops had combined forces, saying Khmer Rouge guerrillas had attacked Mr. Hun Sen's troops east of O Smach. The rival Cambodian factions have been battling for O Smach — an unlikely strategic target set in a remote and malarial corner of northwest Cambodia's jungle region — for the past 10 days.

The battle for the agricultural and trading town broke out after forces loyal to Mr. Hun Sen routed the prince's outgunned men from their other northern strongholds. Thai army regional commander, Major General Chirarak Pongpradom said Saturday that although it was not safe for the some 21,000 "displaced persons" to return to O Smach, arrangements could be made if they wanted to return to Poipet, another border town.

"If someone wants to stay here temporarily — if they are waiting for some family member fighting in O Smach — that is Okay," Gen. Chirarak told reporters at a temporary refugee site some five kilometres from Chong Chom.

Otherwise, they could be transported to Poipet, some 125 kilometres southwest of here, opposite the Aranya-prathet district of Thailand's eastern Sa Kaew province, he said.

Mr. Hun Sen seized sole control of Phnom Penh and the coalition government in early July after toppling Prince Ranariddh in a weekend of bloody street fighting in the capital.

Prince Ranariddh Saturday denied accusations from Phnom Penh that he had instigated the takeover by plotting with the Khmer Rouge to overthrow the government.

The prince said that in his capacity as First Prime Minister he had signed a joint statement with nominal Khmer Rouge leader Khieu Samphan announcing the rebel movement's recognition of the constitution and king and the severing of all links with Pol Pot.

"The aim of the joint statement was to put an end to the Khmer Rouge both as a political and military movement through peaceful means and therefore achieve real and lasting peace for Cambodia," he said Saturday in a statement received here.

There had also been a chance that Pol Pot — held responsible for the deaths of some two million Cambodians during the 1975-79 reign of the Khmer Rouge and deposed by the rebels in a show trial last month — could be tried by an international tribunal, he said.

"Hun Sen's coup of July 5-6, 1997 put an end to all these positive moves," Prince Ranariddh said.

Meanwhile a former Cambodian strongman feared to have been killed during a coup last month fled the country Friday after seven weeks in hiding.

Pen Sovann, who re-entered the political scene just a few months before the coup, looked tired and drawn as he departed from Phnom Penh International Airport Friday morning for Malaysia en route to a third country.

In a show of concern for his safety, U.S. Ambassador Kenneth Quinn escorted him from the tarmac onto the plane.

Mr. Pen Sovann said he had been kept in "many, many" different locations since the July 5-6 coup in which Second Prime Minister Hun Sen ousted First Prime Minister Prince Norodom Ranariddh.

A month before the coup, Mr. Pen Sovann announced he was establishing a new political party to contest the May 1998 general election. He harshly denounced Mr. Hun Sen, and was widely regarded as a Prince Ranariddh ally.

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Cambodian government soldiers load a BM-21 Soviet-made multiple rocket launcher on Route 68, 20 kilometres south of the frontlines of O'Smach in northern Cambodia (Reuters photo)

5 more bodies recovered after Nigeria clashes

LAGOS (AFP) — Five more corpses were recovered in a stream in the Nigerian town of Modakeke, bringing the death toll in communal clashes to 70 within the past week, newspapers said Saturday.

Newspapers said the bodies were discovered Friday following clashes between Modakeke and life residents over the relocation of a regional government headquarters common to the two communities.

The Osun state govern-

ment, which relocated the headquarters from Enuwa to Oke Ogbu, a community controlled by the life, imposed a dusk-to-dawn curfew on the two feuding communities as well as deployed riot policemen to these towns and nearby villages.

Twelve residents of the two communities were last Thursday before an life court formally charged with felony, arson, rioting and causing a breach of the peace.

Ten other suspects still in police detention over the disturbances would soon be charged as soon as the investigation into their cases was completed, the police stated.

The clashes, triggered a week ago when about 5,000 Modakeke youths took to the streets and chanted slogans which the life community said insulted their traditional king, Oba Okunade Sijuwade.

The life people confronted them and a bloody confron-

tation followed, in which scores of people were also injured and houses and vehicles were vandalised.

Peace is gradually returning Saturday to the two towns, according to residents and local press reports.

Commercial vehicles which disappeared from the streets in the two towns are gradually returning while shops and offices have also started to reopen.

But police are still mounting surveillance on the two towns and their villages.

Puerto Rico could be model for East Timor peace — rebel leader

LISBON (AFP) — East Timor rebels could accept the sort of relationship Puerto Rico has with the United States as a model for future ties between East Timor and Indonesia, a rebel leader said on Portuguese television.

It was one of the solutions put forward in U.N. sponsored negotiations to try to break the deadlock over the former Portuguese colony that Indonesia invaded in 1975, sparking an armed opposition by separatists.

"It has not been rejected by the resistance," said East Timor guerrilla leader, Kozis Santana. "We work on the principle that any solu-

tion aimed at allowing the people of East Timor the right to self-determination is acceptable," he said.

Puerto Rico has commonwealth status with the United States which allows the Caribbean island to have almost complete self-government. Only foreign relations and defence remain the domain of the U.S. federal government.

Under the proposal for East Timor, the territory would become a state with formal links with Indonesia, which would take over defence and foreign affairs while allowing local self-government in other areas.

During the interview, Mr.

Santana urged Lisbon to state its position on what he called the Puerto Rican solution.

He also called on Portuguese Prime Minister Antonio Guterres to consider rebels as an integral part of the Portuguese army, since "we operate in the mountains of East Timor defending a country which is still internationally recognised as a part of Portugal."

The United Nations has never recognised Indonesian rule over East Timor. Indonesia invaded in 1975 at the time when Portugal was overthrowing dictatorial rule and withdrawing from most of its colonies.

'Britain's queen free to travel in India'

NEW DELHI (AP) — Backtracking from an earlier statement asking Britain's Queen Elizabeth II not to visit the northern state of Punjab, India's prime minister has said she can travel freely in his country, newspapers reported Friday.

"She is welcome to visit any part of the country," Inder Kumar Gujral was quoted as saying in the Times of India and The Asian Age.

Britain's Observer newspaper earlier this

week quoted Mr. Gujral as saying the government had asked the queen to skip the Sikh holy city of Amritsar because of a massacre there by British forces in 1919.

Relatives of massacre victims had demanded that the Queen apologise for the killing of 379 civilians and wounding of 1,200 others. Britain ruled India for some 200 years until 1947 and the queen's visit was to commemorate 50 years of Indian independence.

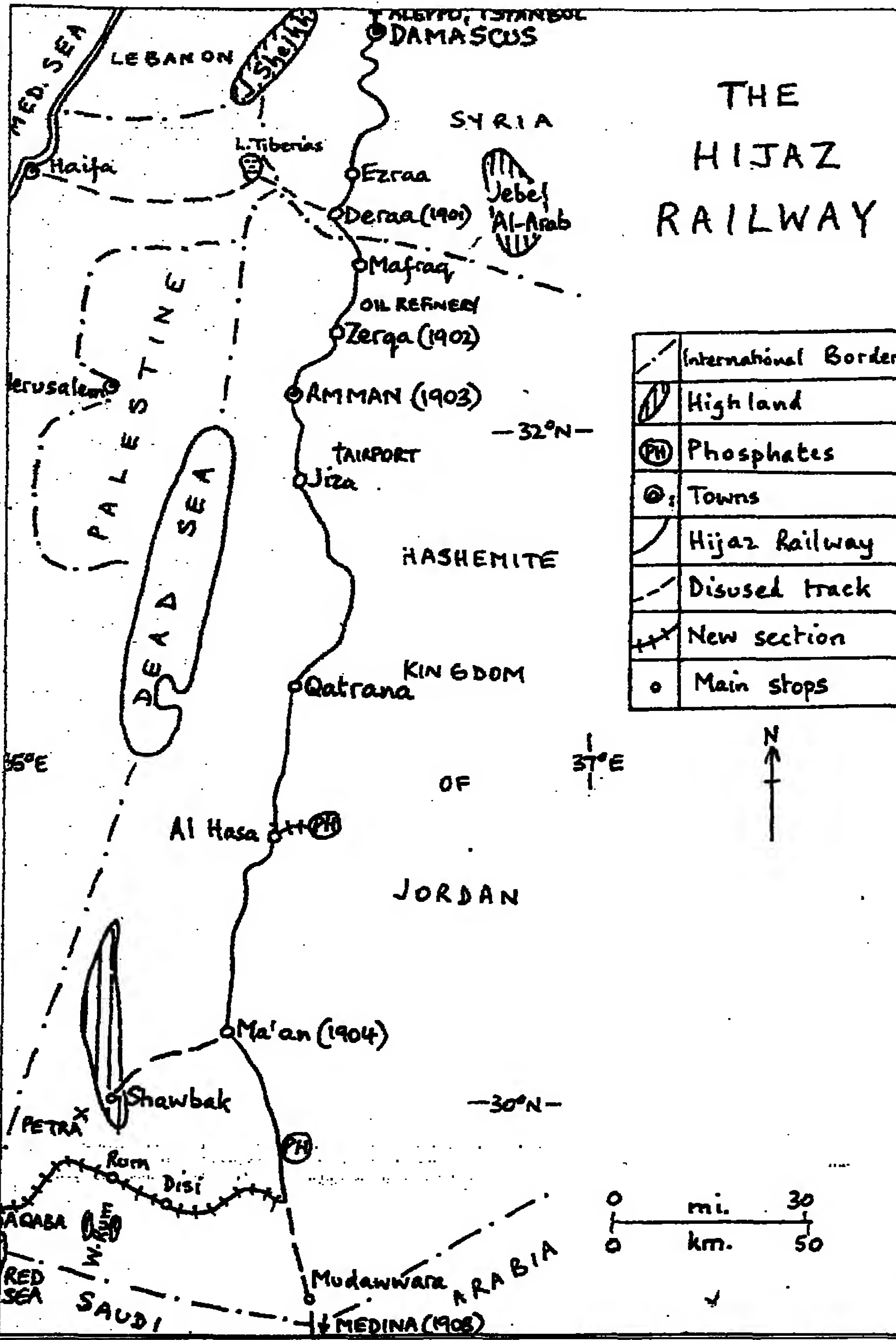
Hijaz railway — big potential, no near-future plans

By Richard Tanner

NINE HOURS after leaving Damascus, the jogging on hard wooden seats broken by long waits at dusty deserted stations, our train stopped. The guard got down, opened the gates and we had arrived in Amman. The "mahatta" had its Arabic signs paralleled in English: Station Master, Waiting Room, Platform. As the small crowd of passengers made for the Way Out, we stayed to admire the relics from an earlier era: old wagons, a wooden turntable, water pumps and half-a-dozen locomotives, one in steam. Though worried by our interest, station officials eventually allowed us to inspect these reminders of the last days of the Ottoman Empire, of the Great Arab Revolt and of T. E. Lawrence.

Whilst it may have been planned to ease the pilgrims' hardship on the annual Haj, the concept of a Hijaz railway was seized upon both by the Ottomans, who saw it as an opportunity to reestablish their rule over bedouin lands, and by their German allies, needing a counter to the British control of the Suez Canal-Red Sea route. His appeals to the Muslim World having raised the money, Sultan Abdul Hamid engaged a German engineer, Heinrich Meissner, who used Turkish army labour to construct the "Pilgrims' railway" from Damascus to Medina between 1901 and 1908. Eight hundred and twenty miles long, it followed the old caravan route marked by wells, reservoirs and ruins, first to Deraa, with its 100 mile-long branch line to Haifa and the Mediterranean, then on through Ma'raq, Zarqa, Amman, Qatranah and Ma'an, before heading south-east into Arabia Desserta and Medina.

From the start, the builders were harassed by local bedouins anxious to retain their lucrative spice and pilgrim route. Blockhouses had to be built at 10 mile intervals to protect the track and iron sleepers used to prevent easy removal. During 1916-18, Lawrence continued the tradition of attacking the railway, tying up enough of the Turkish army for Allenby to push north through Palestine to ensure the Ottoman collapse. While the southern section beyond Ma'an was abandoned after only 10 years' use, the allies repaired the track to Damascus on which we had been travelling. Our journey from Damas-



cus had not been without incident. Officials at that splendid late Ottoman station, had directed us to a suburban station; the weekly "express" was unable to negotiate the open crossings and started traffic to reach the centre of this bustling metropolis. Arriving to ensure our seats, we found Gadam Station deserted, waited half an hour for the first rolling stock to arrive and still longer for the booking office to open. We paid 160 Syrian pounds, around

the route became more rugged and the need for the narrow-gauge track more obvious as we twisted through deeply incised limestone hills to reach Zarqa. Here progress slowed to half-crawl as we squeezed past busy market stalls and refugee housing built right against the track. After stopping at another level crossing, this time to set down a family living up the road, our route followed the attractive Zarqa valley, winding through irrigated fields before making the final ascent into Amman to complete the 150-mile journey.

Once merely a stop on the three-day journey to Medina, Amman is now the terminus. Though the track south was a lifeline to central Jordan until its transfer to the phosphate companies twenty years ago, now it is used only by occasional "specials." These charter trains, sometimes headed by a steamer, climb the hairpins onto the plateau, carrying up to 250 passengers in the five surviving carriages south into the desert to Jiza or Qatranah. Even the locals have given up digging holes by the track to find the last payroll of the Turkish army delivered but not paid in 1917. South of Ma'an, the rails have been lifted, though an original engine was still stranded in its shed at Madain Saleh in the 1960s.

At that time, talks between Jordan, Syria and Saudi Arabia suggested each would pay one-third of the cost of reopening the line, but nothing was done. The Saudis already had a good road from Jeddah through Medina to Mudawwara and may have felt one month's Haj trade would not support the railway through eleven lean months. After 1967, Jordan and Syria had other thoughts on their minds — healing the wounds of war and housing Palestinian refugees. More recent ideas to import oil through Aqaba for Zarqa refinery or to exchange Amman's cement for Hauran barley have come to nothing, for the run-down narrow-gauge railway cannot carry such bulky goods. However, the development of phosphate mining in central Jordan has revived a second section of the railway. Thirty miles of track south of Ma'an has been relied on and a new line built past Wadi Rum and down the gorge to the port of Aqaba, carrying a million tonnes a month of phosphates for exports. There is a certain irony in being able to ride past the head of Wadi Rum where David Lean set up tracks for his film "Lawrence of Arabia." Clearly the tourist possibilities are not lost on Borhan Shreydeh, until recently director general of Hijazi Railway.

The charter trains from Amman could complete the run to Aqaba, but their braking system was never designed for the steep gradients down to the sea. Without new stock, a branch line

into Wadi Rum must remain a dream; so too any plans to reopen the old timber fuel branch line up to Shobak for tourists en route to Petra. More realistic are Borhan's ideas for a working museum at Amman's mahatta, not just for tourists, but for Jordanian students as well, to see how their country was opened up by the Pilgrim Railway.

This old railway did indeed bring the desert margins back to life ninety years ago. Jordan's centre of gravity moved eastwards, down from the highlands around Irbid, Ajlun, Salt and Karak, and onto the plains where new towns grew around the stations: Ma'raq, Zarqa, Amman, Jiza, Qatranah, Ma'an. Some of these places were not new at all, but ancient sites neglected since Roman-Byzantine-Umayyad times and now reestablished along this modern Via Trajana.

Borhan proposes a new north-south railway line, 20 kilometres east of the old, encouraging further reclamation of the desert margins. It would provide work, disperse Jordan's rapidly growing population and preserve the old line. The new line would have to be standard gauge, not only to carry the phosphate exports, the oil imports, the passing trade in sheep and the cement-for-grain trade but also to reach Europe over Syrian and Turkish tracks, and maybe through Saudi Arabia to the Gulf. Adding an east-west route from Haifa to Baghdad would put Jordan really at the hub of things.

As the giant trucks rumble down the Desert Highway from Europe and Turkey to Saudi Arabia and the Gulf, there seems little chance of the Hijaz Railway taking the strain.

This old, single-track, narrow-gauge railway minimally maintained for 90 years needs major investment or replacement. Until that happens, Borhan and the charitable institution that runs the railway will have to be content with improvements to the Damascus-Amman run, a railway museum at Amman Mahatta and a few more steam trips into the desert.

The writer is teacher of geography at the Baccalaureate School, Amman. He contributed the above article to the Jordan Times.

Brain vs. brawn in first mind Olympics

By Scott McCormack
Reuter

LONDON — The world of competitive sport faces a new breed of athlete, the mental gymnast, vying for gold at the first mind sports olympiad, a week of brain games has opened in London on Monday. Instead of slugging it out in the boxing ring or tumbling across padded floormats, competitors perform intellectual acrobatics in events ranging from speed reading to computer programming and crossword puzzles to the more traditional chess and draughts (checkers).

More than 1,500 people have signed up to take part in the olympiad, which is open to anyone wanting to test his or her cranial capacity — and spend a week playing games.

"All these people are suddenly coming out and saying 'yes, we love scrabble, we think it helps the mind'," said organiser Tony Buzan without a hint of irony. "People who do crosswords or jigsaws have somehow been made to think they were wasting their time. But this is really important stuff."

Although the organisers hope to promote the brain over the body, couch potatoes with nothing better to do than spend the day solving

crosswords and watching television quiz shows will be unlikely to earn any olympic laurels. "The top mental athletes are also extremely physically fit," Mr. Buzan said. "There is a strong connection between the two."

The event was the brainchild of two chess grandmasters and Mr. Buzan, a British memory-guru and motivational speaker who has published 19 books on the power of the mind.

"For thousands of years there have been physical championships. It seemed odd that the world had focused for so long on the body and not on the brain," said Mr. Buzan.

The olympiad also pits men against women, billing itself as "the first global intellectual battlefield".

From phone books to football cards

Competitors in the events at London's Royal Festival Hall include the likes of Creighton Carvallo, a man who once memorised the infinite mathematical number Pi — the ratio of the circumference of a circle to its diameter — to 20,013 decimal places.

Just getting that many digits out of his mouth in 1980 took the former psychiatric nurse nine hours and 10 minutes.

The 52-year-old retired recently and now travels around the world practising his skills and showing off his cerebral prowess on television programmes.

Asked why he devoted so much time to committing digits to memory, Mr. Carvallo explained that he simply liked figures. "I started memorising things when I was seven, at first football cards from bubble gum packets, and just keep getting better and better at it."

"With hard mental training we can actually rewire our brains. It gets more sophisticated and the cells become more complex. It's pretty revolutionary."

Aside from cramming his head full of sporting statistics and endless streams of decimals, Mr. Carvallo can recite by heart 5,000 telephone numbers from his home town Middlesbrough in northeast England, including all those beginning with the letter A and all the Smiths, perhaps the most common surname in Britain.

He is competing in the memory category, a two-day event that includes memorising 2,000 random digits in one hour, reciting poetry, matching names with faces, and

learning binary computer code, a string of 1s and 0s.

But Mr. Carvallo remains undeterred by the prospect of stiff competition. "I'm not nervous. I just love it," he said, adding that he won a world record last week when he memorised 12 random digits in 2 seconds.

But where's my car parked? Aside from the memory event, other categories include competitions for mental calculation, cre-

ative thinking, and IQ tests. There are also things for dihard gamers, such as jigsaw puzzles, rummikub, mastermind, and stratego plus gin rummy, Chinese chess and more exotic, lesser-known games like zatre and dama.

Glory for the victors will not just be wearing a gold medal, but actually growing smarter while they probe the powers of the human mind. "The brain works as a muscle — the harder you use it, the more it grows," proclaims a

brochure for the competition, predicting that brain games would be the great growth area of the next millennium.

Mr. Buzan, a trained psychologist who advises the British Olympic rowing team, explained that taking part in thought-provoking pursuits actually increases brain capacity.

"With hard mental training we can actually rewire our brains. It gets more sophisticated and the cells become more complex. It's pretty revolutionary," he said.

For the average person who occasionally forgets where he or she parked the car or put the keys, Mr. Buzan — who says his IQ ranges from 150 to 200 depending on the day — offered hope.

He said the first step to intellectual improvement was to turn the brain into a hobby. Asked what that meant, he replied: "Anyone who doesn't understand the brain asks that question. It means opening your mind like a child or an artist, improving your ability to imagine and sense things."

Referring to the car dilemma, Mr. Buzan asked: "How could you possibly lose a three tonne object? Because you didn't imagine it, associate it with the environment. You have to find connections, learn to link things together."

UNIVERSITY OF JORDAN

ANNOUNCEMENT



The University of Jordan shall introduce a new International Programme which leads to the award of the B.Sc. Degree in Medicine and Surgery, effective the fall semester of the upcoming academic year 1997/98. The programme is intended to attract international students with high grade point averages in the High School (Tawjihi) Certificate, or its equivalence, on competitive basis. Registration for the programme, which started on August 18, 1997, shall remain open for a further period of three weeks.

Application forms may be obtained from one of the following locations:

- I. Inside Jordan:**
 - Department of Registration and Admission
University of Jordan
Amman-Jordan
Tel. No.: 962 6 843555 (Extension: 2167/2197)
Fax: 962 6 832318
E-Mail: postmaster@ujced.edu
 - The University of Jordan Hospital
University of Jordan
Amman-Jordan
Fax 962 6 841348
- II. Outside Jordan:**
 - Offices of the Cultural Attaches at the Embassies of the Hashemite Kingdom abroad.

Terms and conditions for admission to the programme:

- Applicant should NOT be holder of the Jordanian citizenship.
- The Tawjihi Certificate (Science stream) or its equivalence with a grade point average of not less than 85%.
- An application fee of \$100.

Fees:

The annual fees for the programme are \$16,000 for the first three years and \$17,000 for the second three years distributed as follows:

The first three years (Basic Medical Sciences):

\$7 for the first and second semesters.

\$2 for the summer semester.

The second three years (Clinical Medical Sciences):

\$7 for the first and second semesters

\$3 for the summer semester

Miscellaneous fees:

\$187.5 per semester which cover health insurance, life insurance, library usage, etc.

Government authorises floating \$100 million Jordanian sovereign bonds on world markets

By Tareq Ayyoub
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Council of Ministers Saturday decided to float sovereign bonds on world markets in order to attract foreign investors and repay some of the Kingdom's "commercial loans," Deputy Prime Minister for Development Affairs Jawad

Anani said. Dr. Anani said that the \$100 million worth bonds, which will be issued by the treasury, would be floated in a public tender and would be made available on the international bourses.

The minister told the Jordan Times that the reason behind this move was not "because the Kingdom was

in need of new loans. It is a symbol of trust in the Jordanian economy," especially after the positive reaction the Kingdom received from foreign investors when the Jordan Phosphate Co. floated its own bonds last month.

"The new move is a clear message to foreign investors who are willing to come to Jordan and look for shares

and bonds," Dr. Anani added.

"By these two moves we have entered the world market. We are planning to float JD50 million in bonds on the domestic market in the near future for local and foreign investors," the minister added without giving a date on the issuance of the bonds in local currency.

Minister of State for Information Affairs Samir Mutawi told reporters following Saturday's Cabinet session that the period of floating is five years, and that interest will be paid in lump sum.

Dr. Mutawi added that the interest rate will be fixed according to global interest rates. He said foreign banks will be invited to take part in the tender to purchase these bonds.

The minister said the marketing of these bonds on the world markets should be completed by November 15.

In other developments, Dr. Mutawi told reporters that upon a recommendation from the inner Cabinet, the Council of Ministers decided to speed up the work on the Disi Amman conveyer project, which would make additional water resources available to the capital.

He said that a tender for the project will be offered according to the build-operate-transfer contract (BOT) instead of the traditional tender method.

The Cabinet also decided that the pipelines used in this project should be Jordanian-made as a step towards encouraging national industry.

Dr. Mutawi said a committee comprised of the ministers of Trade, Industry and Supply, Finance, Water and Irrigation, and Public Works and Housing was formed to follow up the work of this project.

The \$420 million project will offer 100 million cubic metres (MCM) of additional water to the capital.

It consists of 310 kilometres of pipeline, 2,100 wells, reservoirs and four pumping stations to convey 120 MCM per year from the Disi aquifer to Amman and the southern governorates.

Details of the project and the tender have been completed.

The minister said the cabinet also approved a proposal by the Minister of Trade, Industry and Supply Hani Mulki to establish a "technical committee" that would be responsible for the Kingdom's relations with the World Trade Organisation (WTO).

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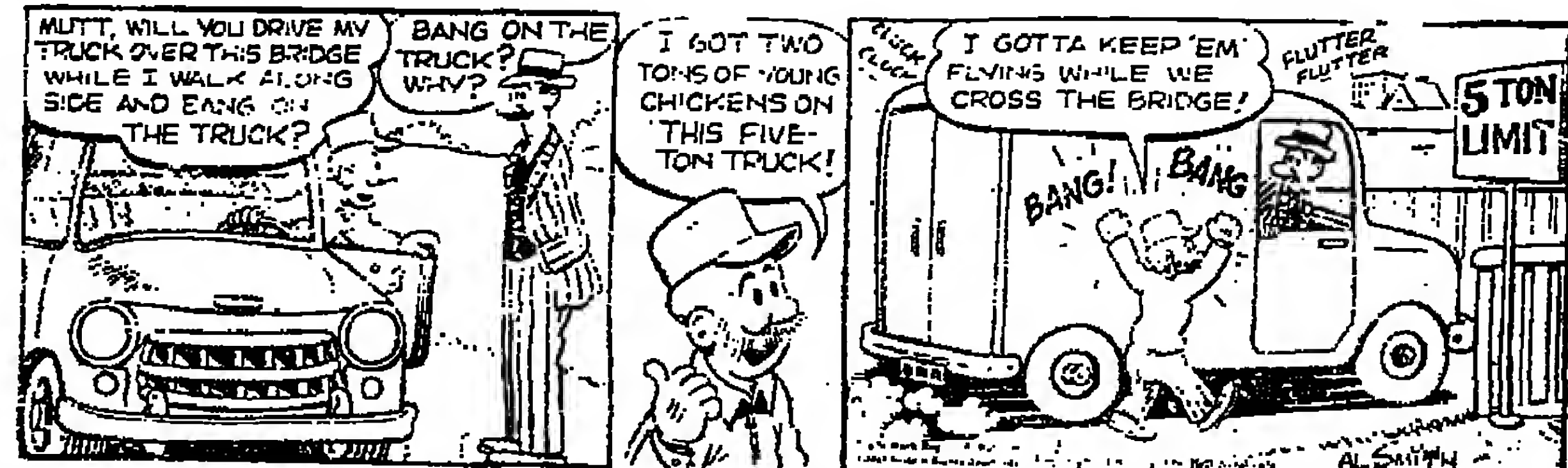
Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



REUTERS

REUTERS

The Business of Information

Major Currencies & Cross Rates									
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	SGD	HKD	THB	MYR
US Dollar	1.0000	1.8185	0.6216	1.5053	118.35	1.2338	1773.48	2.0488	6.1280
DE Mark	0.5496	1.0000	0.3413	0.8273	65.04	0.7657	974.44	1.1280	3.3875
GB Sterling	1.6088	2.9210	1.0000	2.4008	188.16	2.2420	2833.17	3.2958	9.8587
CH Franc	0.6643	1.2080	0.4124	1.0000	76.59	0.9232	1177.45	136.46	4.0685
JP Yen	0.0084	1.5357	0.0154	0.0127	1.0000	0.0137	14.98	173.02	5.1757
CA Dollar	0.7176	1.3047	0.4454	1.0794	1.18	1.2718	1.4590	4.3841	1.3434
IT Lira	0.0006	1.0254	0.3301	0.8848	1500.83	0.7854	11.54	3.4534	2.9899
NL Guilder	0.4881	0.8877	0.3031	0.7347	57.72	0.8799	885.25	1.2989	3.9899
FR Franc	0.1632	0.2999	0.1014	0.2450	19.29	0.2274	33.42	33.4200	1.0000

Middle Eastern Currencies									
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	SGD	HKD	THB	MYR
US Dollar	1.0000	1.8185	0.6216	1.5053	118.35	1.2338	1773.48	2.0488	6.1280
Jordan Dinar	1.4124	2.5573	0.5325	1.5415	0.4306	5.1878	2163.14	4.7952	14.5952
Saudi Riyal	0.2666	0.4818	0.1005	0.297	0.0813	0.98	408.35	0.9052	2.8552
Bahrain Dinar	2.85	5.080	1.2485	3.58	0.3088	3.74	4082.44	9.0055	28.5552
Qatar Dinar	0.2747	0.4945	0.1033	0.293	0.0838	1.01	420.72	0.9326	2.9326
Kuwait Dinar	3.2798	5.9521	1.2308	3.584	1.194	12.05	5022.96	0.9326	2.9326
Emirate Dinar	0.2723	0.4928	0.1028	0.2931	0.0830	1.01	416.96	0.9244	2.9244
Lebanese 1000	0.65	1.1723	0.2483	0.692	0.1991	2.3982	1.154	3.4534	2.9899
Egyptian	0.2346	0.4255	0.1047	0.2931	0.0838	1.018	451.10	1.0000	3.0000

Energy									
Oil	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	SGD	HKD	THB	MYR
Brent	18.71	33.83	8.18	22.53	1781.5	235.8	3118.5	368.5	1148.5
WTI	18.71	33.83	8.18	22.53	1781.5	235.8	3118.5	368.5	1148.5
Bonny	18.71	33.83	8.18	22.53	1781.5	235.8	3118.5	368.5	1148.5
Dubai	18.71	33.83	8.18	22.53	1781.5	235.8	3118.5	368.5	1148.5
UL Gas	216.00	390.00	96.00	264.00	20880.0	2752.0	34416.0	4008.0	12480.0

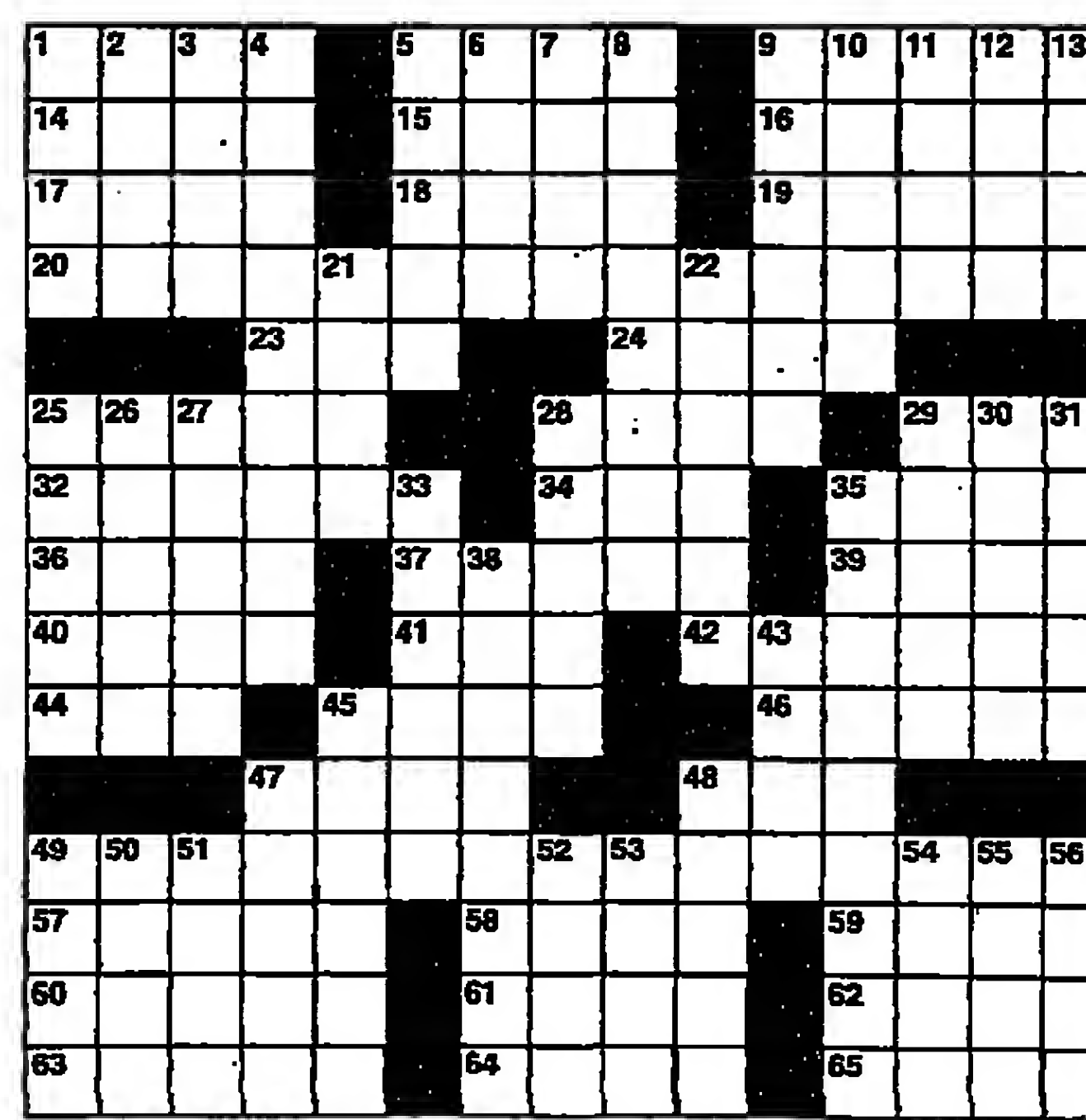
Metal Prices									
Metal	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	SGD	HKD	THB	MYR
Gold (oz)	325.75	591.25	146.25	408.75	32187.5	4256.25	54112.5	6488.75	20087.5
Silver (oz)	4.68	8.48	2.18	6.08	481.5	63.5	811.5	97.5	311.5
Platinum (oz)	413	748	193	538	42512.5	5637.5	71612.5	8688.75	27512.5
AL (3 Months)	1637	2980	758	2108	16612.5	2187.5	27812.5	3368.75	10812.5
CU (3 Months)	2154	3918	1008	2808	22512.5	2967.5	37612.5	4568.75	14612.5
Zinc (3 Months)	1495	2708	708	1958	15612.5	2057.5	26512.5	3218.75	10312.5
Lead (3 Months)	637	1158	308	858	6812.5	897.5	11412.5	1388.75	4412.5
Ni (3 Months)	6650	12080	3118	8680	69125	9172.5	116125	14188.75	45612.5

Main Equity Indices									
Index	Value	Change	% Change	High	Low	Open	Close	Volume	Turnover
New York DOW JONES	7887.81	-4.04	-0.05	7893.7	7718.5	7894	7887.81	1.2B	1.2B
New York S&P 500	923.54	-1.51	-0.16	925.05	905.42	925.05	923.54	1.2B	1.2B
London FT-SE 100	4901.1	-76.9	-1.54	4987.7	4867.1	4878	4901.1	1.2B	1.2B
Tokyo NIKKEI 225	18650.17	-508.95	-2.65	19074	18578	19157	18650.17	1.2B	1.2B
Paris CAC 40	2904.23	-53	-1.79	2948.7	2877.3	2957.2	2904.23	1.2B	1.2B
Frankfurt DAX	4088.01	-167.68	-3.94	4172.1	4078.3	4253.7	4088.01	1.2B	1.2B

Energy									
Commodity	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	SGD	HKD	THB	MYR
Coffee (c/lb)	172.5	313.5	80.5	225.5	1781.5	235.8	3118.5	368.5	1148.5
Cocoa (\$/ton)	1828	3418	888	2458	19612.5	2617.5	33612.5	4068.75	12812.5
Sugar (\$/ton)	247.9	451.5	115.5	321.5	25612.5	3387.5	42812.5	5168.75	16312.5
Wheat (\$/ton)	139	253.5	64.5	178.5	14112.5	1867.5	23612.5	2868.75	9112.5
Soy (\$/ton)	22.87	42.15	10.75	29.55	2361.25	311.5	3961.25	476.75	1511.25
Tea (kg)	165	301.5	76.5	211.5	16612.5	2187.5	27812.5	3368.75	10812.5
Barley (\$/ton)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Rice (\$/ton)	450	820.5	209.5	581.5	4612.5	601.5	7612.5	921.5	2961.25

THE Daily Crossword

ACROSS
1 Trade
5 Strike out
9 "People Play"
14 Slight elevation
15 Gaelic
16 Make amends
17 Russian saint
18 Phoned
19 Culprit
20 Betting on multiple entrants
23 Boob tubes
24 Hot spot
25 — Beach (WWII invasion spot)
28 Nail
29 — Plaines, IL
32 Boat basin
34 Goal
35 Negri of the silents
36 Computer image
37 "Triste"
39 Cafe au —
40 Math branch
41 Boxer of note
42 Land
43 — gin
45 U.S. president
46 Collier kind
48 Where its are made
49 Taking great risk
57 Linda of "Mel's Diner"
58 Lose crispness
59 Saharan
60 Included with
61 "I cannot tell —"
62 Othello's "friend"
63 Zesty
64 Calendar span
65 Widen



by Alvin Becker

Puzzle solved:									
BRER	COLT	HALT	ALPHA	EDIE	NEARS	RAZE	OTTOMAN	TIARA	TIARA
ABAS	SIREN	TALI	DILIGENT	GROPE	STEAL	TETRA	TEE	USE	ROIL
AVIATOR	ISLANDS	PEND	REBUS	MEET	ETRE	ASONE	PACE	DOES	TOED
STOW									

DOWN
1 Do the mail
2 Volition
3 Pond plant
4 Bauble
5 Flowerless plants
6 "To — and a bone..."
7 "It Romantic?"
8 Some chickens
9 Landed a fish
10 Dined at home
11 Underground pest
12 Organic compound
13 Transport with delight
21 Lend of tennis
22 Elusive one
25 Leaves out
26 Large, pref.
27 Jack-in-the-pulpit type plant
28 Contradict
29 Factious
30 Upper crust
31 Lecher
33 Island of Arthurian legend
35 Obeys the rules
38 "It's — to Tipperary"
43 Outline sharply
45 Parsimonious
47 Ogling
48 Aquatic animal
49 Land map
50 Dalai —
51 The Bard's river
52 Artifice
53 Hip bones
54 Dies —
55 Baltic capital
56 Ancient kingdom

HOROSCOPE
FORECAST FOR SUN-
DAY, AUGUST 24, 1997
By Thomas S. Pierson,
Astrologer, Carroll
Richter Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Follow your uncanny intuition regarding home affairs and seek the advice of your mate before making any final decisions. Discuss these ideas with him or her. The days ahead can look brighter if you have the right attitude.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) This is a good day today to find out exactly what allies will do to help you gain your aims, so discuss the situation with them. Be enthused with the prospect of participating in recreational activities with close friends.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Get the right data which is necessary to impress those from whom you want backing. Find channels to get your ideas across and make the effort to seek knowledgeable people who are willing to provide you with the answers.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Use some creative ability you possess today and handle the details of such career activities more precisely. Serve someone well you are fond of by doing something special which they would not expect and can be well received.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Study seriously today and know what your true purpose is in life. State your aims honestly and clearly to those who can be of great assistance. Keep away from crowds later this evening and spend quality time with your loved ones.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Study the philosophy of life which interests you most. Let knowledgeable people know what decisions you have made. Show your good character towards those people whom you find helpful and make the best use of their advice.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Concentrate on the best manner today to handle monetary and property matters for the days ahead. Write down your ideas so you won't forget them and seek out the advice of experts if you discover that you have any difficulties.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Recheck your personal aims today so that they become more realistic. Stop all that wishful thinking and become more active with the lives of your loved ones. Drive carefully while on the highway later this evening.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Get together quietly with experts who can assist you in career activities. The evening is fine for seeing good past close friends and being happy with them. This is a good time for you to meet with fellow associates on a new project.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Visit with long-time friends who are reliable and whom you can discuss any difficulties with. State your private terms, and seek advice. Much pleasure can come your way tonight, so spend this time with your loved ones.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Put your thinking cap on today and study a new outlet through which you can become more successful. See your friends later this evening and participate in recreational activities which everyone will find enjoyable.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) You are anxious to make some radical changes today, however, wait for a better day to do this. Study your systems of operation and learn how to improve them, thereby you can be quite successful in the days ahead.

Birthstone of August: Peridot — Golden Quartz

Business

More

By Samir G

Jordan Times Site

The Jordan Press Fo

estimated by 50 per cent to

the first half from JD0

to JD4.55 million

in 1996 to JD950.0

million in 1995.0

million in 1994.0

million in 1993.0

million in 1992.0

million in 1991.0

million in 1990.0

million in 1989.0

million in 1988.0

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million in 1977.0

million in 1976.0

million in 1975.0

million in 1974.0

million in 1973.0

million in 1972.0

million in 1971.0

million in 1970.0

More Jordanian companies announce mid-year financial results

By Samir Ghawi
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Jordan Press Foundation Company boosted its net profit by 80 per cent to JD1.14 million at the end of this year's first half from JD0.64 million posted at the end of 1996 first half.

Having earned a JD4.58 million during the first half of 1997 (JD4.44 million in 1996) the company's gross profit stood at JD1.52 million (JD980,000) before being lowered by depreciation, administrative and general costs.

Lower raw material inventory and spare parts was the main factor behind current assets dropping from JD6.60 million to JD5.98 million at the end of last June. However, the balance of cash on hand and at banks increased to JD1.1 million.

By adding the JD6.62 million net value of fixed assets to

the current portion, total assets stood at JD12.59 million.

The company, which publishes the Arabic daily Al Ra'i and the Jordan Times repaid about JD1 million of bank debts during the first six months of this year and also lowered the balance of the long-term loan.

As such, the current liabilities fell from JD2.69 million at the end of June 1996 to JD1.41 million at the end of June 1997.

Shareholders' equity went up by about JD0.6 million to reach JD10.94 million at the end of last June.

The Jordan International Trading Centre

From JD3.43 million of sales, the company was able to raise a JD252,397 gross profit which turned into a net profit of JD57,187 when general, selling and administrative costs were taken into account.

Of the total assets which amounted to JD5.78 million at the end of last June, JD4.35 million were current assets.

Most of the current assets were inventory and receivables as they amounted to JD1.72 million and JD1.69 million respectively. In addition, the company listed JD0.6 million in cash on hand and at banks as well as investments at cost in shares of local companies for a total of JD1.22 million.

Current liabilities, totalling JD2.05 million, were mainly debts to the Jordan Islamic Bank. As to the shareholders' equity, the total stood at JD3.73 million, of which JD3.40

was the company's capital.

The Arab German Insurance Company

The JD222,962 loss posted by the company during the period from March 11, 1996 until Dec. 31, 1996 was turned into a JD177,229 profit during the first half of this year.

Total assets which amounted to JD4.23 million was mostly cash and deposits at banks and various investments in addition to around JD1 million of receivables.

Current liabilities totalling JD0.66 million, technical reserves amounted to JD1.09 million and shareholders' equity were JD2.45 million noting that the paid-up capital is only 50 per cent of the company's JD5 million authorised capital.

The National Portfolio Securities Company

The company narrowed its losses after posting a JD0.38 million loss during the first six months of this year compared to a JD1.2 million loss posted during the same period of 1996.

Of the JD8.44 million total current assets at the end of last June (JD9.38 million in 1996), the securities portfolio was valued at JD7.47 million after taking the necessary allocation for price decline.

A decline was registered in the current liabilities which

fell by about JD700,000 to JD1.54 million, mainly as a result of lower debts to banks.

Noting that by the June 30, 1997, the company's total accumulated losses stood at around JD3 million, the net shareholders' equity has declined from JD7.71 million to JD7.25 million.

The company, which operates as a broker at the Amman Financial Market, has a JD5 million registered capital and its equity includes a statutory reserves and an insurance premium for a total of JD4.97 million.

The Jordan Financial Investments Company

The earnings of the company improved during the first half of this year as a result of higher income from interest and investment returns. As such, earnings climbed from JD47,560 at the end of June 1996 to JD101,063 at the end of last year.

At around JD7.09 million, the total assets remained nearly the same in both period but the change was significant in the different items. In this regard, cash on hand and at banks increased from JD0.47 million to JD1.34 million whereas the balance of the securities portfolio dropped from JD2.22 million to JD1.81 million.

Other changes include a rise in the volume of stakes in companies from JD1.59 million to JD2.27 million and a decline in land and real estate investment from JD2.29 million to JD1.23 million.

Bank credits increased by JD300,000 and that led to a rise in total liabilities from JD196,689 to JD348,057.

Taking into consideration that the company's paid-up capital amounts to JD6.55 million out of a registered JD7.5 million capital. The shareholders' equity totalled JD6.9 million (JD6.74 million in 1996).

Daily Beat

A review of news from the Arabic press

Jordanian bank to circulate \$8m worth of CDs worldwide

** THE ARAB Jordan Investment Bank will circulate \$8 million worth of certificate of deposits (CDs) worldwide, the first such by a Jordanian financial institution. A bank statement said the issue will be signed Sept. 15 and the certificates will be circulated for one year jointly with Paris-based Banque Paribas, London's British Arab Commercial Bank and Cairo's Misr International Bank.

Khalid Masri, the bank's investment manager, said the issue "is a way to increase our sources of longer term foreign currency liabilities." He said the certificates will be marketed internationally by the bank's shareholder, the Arab Investment Co., which is based in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

Mr. Masri said the issue is being arranged by the company's offshore banking unit in Bahrain. The bank was Jordan's first investment institution and was set up in 1978 by Arab, Gulf and Jordanian businessmen. It is the sixth largest bank in terms of assets in the country.

Two new wharfs to be built at Aqaba port

** THE GOVERNMENT plans to build two new docks in the Red Sea port of Aqaba to handle an anticipated increase in cargo traffic following the 1994 peace treaty with Israel.

A Transport Ministry statement said two new wharfs will be built alongside the port's only existing dock. Construction will end in the year 2000 at an envisaged cost of \$36 million.

It said one of the berths will have a maximum capacity of 2,500 tonnes per hour and will be mainly used for industrial cargo. The second, with a capacity of 500 tonnes, will be a multipurpose berth that will handle other cargo, including livestock imports.

The government believes that cargo bound for Aqaba will increase once the U.N. economic embargo against Iraq is lifted, the statement said. Jordan's recent peace with Israel also is expected to result in traffic being diverted to Aqaba, it said.

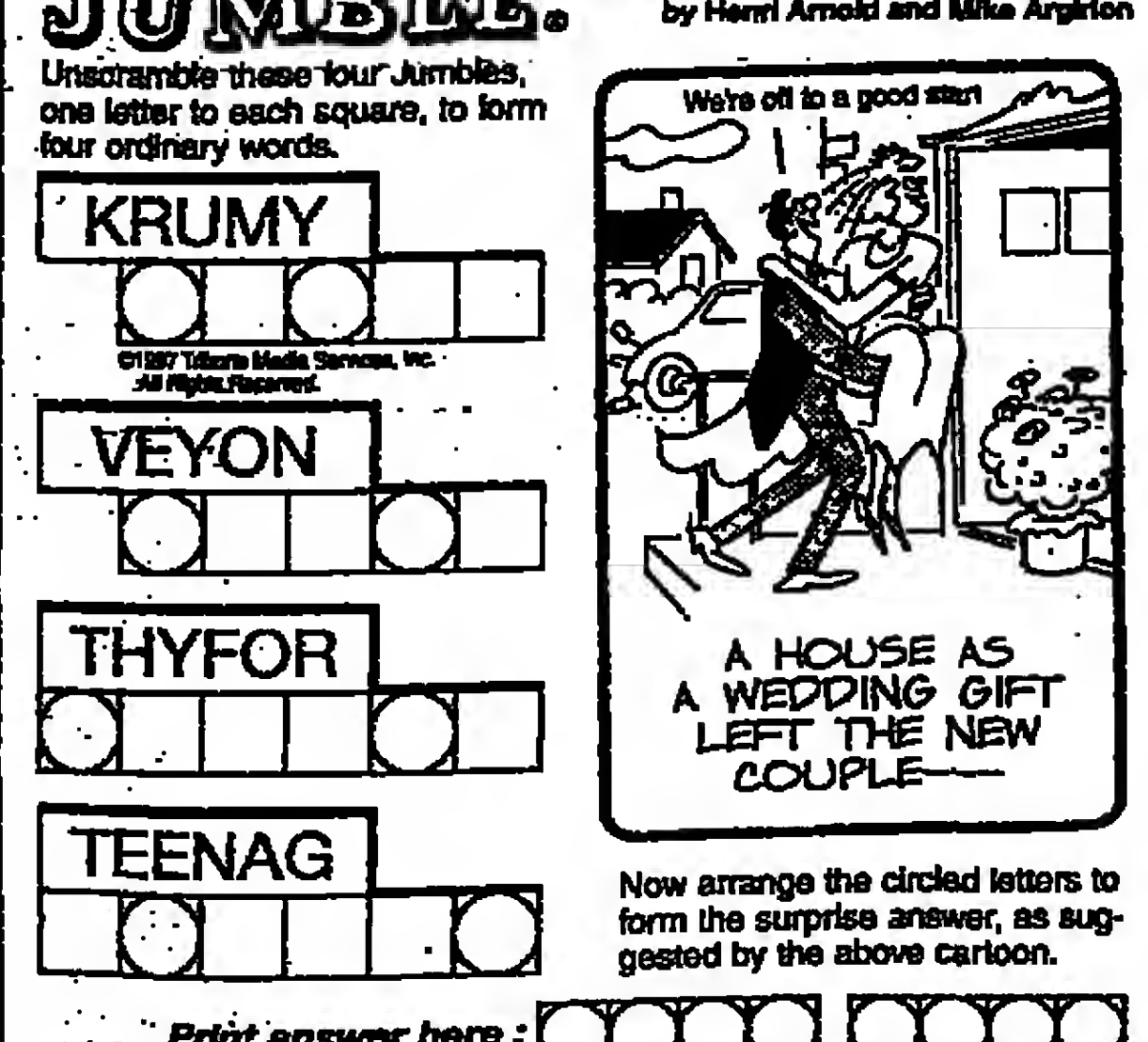
Iraqi trade through Aqaba dwindled following the 1990 Gulf crisis over Kuwait and the ensuing international sanctions on Iraq. Pre-1990 figures show that more than 70 per cent of cargo handled in Aqaba was bound for Iraq.

THE BETTER HALF. By Giesbergen

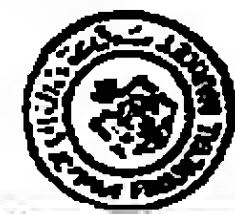


"Dear, when I grow up I want to be just like you."

JUMBLE. THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME



Print answer here: (Answers tomorrow)
Yesterday's Jumble: EPOCH NEEDY TRUSTY ORATOR
Answer: When Junior broke the vase she was SHATTERED

JORDAN FINANCIAL MARKET											
HOUSING BANK CENTER - AMMAN - JORDANIAN											
TELEPHONE: 607171 / 607179											
ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR SATURDAY 23/08/1997											
PAST 12 MONTHS HIGH	LOW	COMPANY'S NAME	P / E	DIV.	NO. OF TRANS.	NO. OF SHARES	VALUE TRADED JD	OPEN PRICE	CLOSE PRICE	CHANGE	
298.000	221.250	ARAB BANK	13.5	1.36	14	300	87740	290.00	294.00	4.00	
N 2.340	1.680	JOB. NATIONAL BK.	E	0.00	23	27903	55225	1.99	1.97	-0.02	
2.480	2.150	INDUSTRIAL DEV. BK.	8.5	7.38	4	5000	11490	2.11	2.29	0.18	
5.200	4.500	THE HOUSING BK.	14.2	4.08	15	11379	53590	4.75	4.75	-	
4.050	3.480	JOB. ISLAMIC BANK	15.7	1.12	17	9310	35781	3.82	3.85	0.03	
3.900	3.000	JOB. INV. FUND BANK	20.6	0.00	4	551	1763	3.25	3.20	-0.05	
2.440	1.000	BEIT AL-VALE (BEITRA)	6	14.56	2	150	154	1.05	1.03	-0.02	
BANK SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 216.02	CHNG: +0.97	80	54523	245834				
2.230	1.590	JOB. FRENCH INSUR.	5.1	8.38	2	1500	2705	1.80	1.79	-0.01	
INSURANCE SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 114.69	CHNG: -0.05	2	1500	2705				
1.820	1.510	JOB. ELECTRIC PWR.	8.1	5.95	21	7699	12942	1.69	1.68	-0.01	
3.050	2.150	SHIPPING LINES	16.4	4.61	1	282	390	3.80	3.82	0.02	
1.550	930	NATL. PORTFOLIO	9	0.00	16	12000	16715	1.39	1.38	-0.01	
8.830	6.750	ALARA	7	7.41	1	100	675	6.75	6.75	-	
1.870	1.150	MID. EAST HOTELS	19.8	0.00	5	2850	3705	1.30	1.30	-	
3.720	2.890	ARAB INTL. INV. EDUC.	8.5	0.00	13	5976	19349	3.25	3.27	0.02	
1.220	930	ZAKA EDUCATION	9	0.00	1	500	500	9.00	1.00	-0.01	
2.230	1.430	UNIFIED CO.	8.4	6.25	12	12450	21952	1.78	1.76	-0.02	
SERVICE SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 111.45	CHNG: +0.05	70	41675	76120				
4.450	3.220	JOB. CEMENT FACT.	26.5	2.80	21	6118	24063	3.98	3.93	-0.05	
4.140	2.750	JOB. PHOSPHATE MINES	10.8	2.57	2	200	779	3.90	3.89	-0.01	
7.750	5.700	ARAB POTASH CO.	14.2	3.28	5	420	2549	4.25	6.10	1.85	
10.250	9.070	JOB. PETROL REFINERY	9.9	8.73	31	1345	13695	10.15	10.18	0.03	
4.250	3.040	ARAB PHARM. MANF.	11.4	4.85	14	2972	12269	4.25	4.12	-0.03	
1.800	1.290	JOB. PAPER MANF.	16.1	0.15	5	1175	1521	1.31	1.30	-0.01	
10.250	5.000	ARAB CHEM. DIST.	17.9	5.13	4	171	1000	5.85	5.85	-	
5.650	4.300	DAR ALDAMA DV. INV.	13.2	4.63	8	6800	36720	5.40	5.40	-	
3.850	2.310	ARAB ALUM. IND.	10.9	10.99	10	4979	16029	2.32	2.28	-0.04	
960	450	LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	10.2	0.00	7	4300	2064	0.88	0.88	-	
1.290	1.000	ARAB PAPER CORP. TRD.	31.2	0.00	3	1250	1275	1.03	1.02	-0.01	
770	510	NATIONAL INDS.	9	0.00	6	9025	4602	0.52	0.51	-0.01	
1.200	510	INTERMED. PETRO. CHEM.	9	0.00	11	6300	3576	0.56	0.57	0.01	
3.000	2.130	NATL. CABLE WIRE MANF.	34.8	0.00	4	450	980	2.28	2.17	-0.11	
920	530	JOB. SILICO-CHEN	9	0.00	11	7750	4675	0.62	0.60	-0.02	
1.670	1.120	ARAB FARM. CHEM.	16.7	5.34	10	1550	2064	1.34	1.31	-0.03	
1.970	1.080	UNIV. MOD. INDS.	9	0.00	22	8800	11293	1.29	1.29	-	
1.510	940	JOB. INDS. RESOURCES	12.6	10.64	17	3387	3183	0.95	0.94	-0.01	
1.520	1.300	NATL. CEMENT	14.0	4.70	21	9278	13023	1.52	1.49	-0.03	
1.070	810	JOB. NEW CABLE CO.	15.8	0.00	15	5050	4343	0.86	0.86	-	
2.050	1.340	EL. TAT. READY WARE	52.8	0.00	1	250	375	1.52	1.51	-0.01	
1.130	1.080	INTL. TOBACCO	6.5	0.00	30	16700	19564	1.15	1.19	0.04	
1.190	860	UNION CH. & VEG.	45.0	0.00	3	311	308	1.01	0.99	-0.02	
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 121.43	CHNG: -1.38	262	100771	181505				
GRAND TOTAL			INDEX: 164.86	CHNG: 0.00	414	198469	506164				
PARALLEL MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR SATURDAY 23/08/1997											
N 650	400	JOB. TRADE FAC.	10.9	0.00	9	13750	5638	0.41	0.41	-	
950	540	JOB. TRV. INV. CO.	9	0.00	12	15643	8749	0.56	0.56	-	
840	660	UNION INV. SOF.	9	0.00	6	25400	5080	0.70	0.70	-	
N 570	370	ARAB PIV. INVEST.	9	0.00	25	43222	16166	0.40	0.39	-0.01	
N 950	720	AL-SABAO INV. CO.	9	0.00	9	8567	4219	0.87	0.85	-0.02	
N 950	610	AL-DAMAYAR 752	71.0	0.00	24	57804	28334	0.73	0.74	0.01	
N 480	200	JOB. INDS. MATCH-JENCO	9	0.00	1	500	130	0.27	0.26	-0.01	
+ 730	510	ARAB FOOD & MED.	9	0.00	4	1950	400	0.50	0.50	-	
N 570	380	ARAB INTL. INV. TRD.	47.2	0.00	9	5877	2410	0.42	0.41	-0.01	
N 750	400	MATL. BUILT. ENG. RAMICO	10.9	0.00	21	32550	15299	0.47	0.47	-	
N 960	500	READY MIX CONCRETE	10.9	0.00	1	10000	9000	0.91	0.90	-0.01	
N 820	710	JORDAN STEEL	34.4	6.58	9	10700	8187	0.77	0.76	-0.01	
N 580	430	ARAB ELECT. INDS.	9	0.00	2	367	186	0.50	0.51	0.01	
N 730	580	MIDEAST PLUMB. 752	9	0.00	5	2850	1112	0.64	0.64	-	
N 670	550	RAZI PHARM. 952	9	0.00	11	11726	5251	0.60	0.60	-	
N 570	320	INDS. ENG.	9	0.00	5	2250	743	0.33	0.33	-	
N 860	730	INDS. CERAMIC	19.1	0.00	2	150	111	0.73	0.73	-	
N 820	590	NATL. POULTRY	9	0.00	10	6250	4298	0.69	0.68	-0.01	
+ N 1,000	730	NAT. ALUMINIUM 752	97.4	0.00	81	144883	67181	0.74	0.70	-0.04	
+ N 1,020	720	ARAB TRP. FOOD FACT.	37.5	0.00	5	6777	752	1.15	1.15	-	
N 860	590	MID.EAST COMPLEX	7.5	16.39	15	12100	7449	0.63	0.61	-0.02	
GRAND TOTAL				266	448346	230673					

Popov clinches gold in 50-freestyle, Pankratov out of 200 butterfly

SEVILLE, Spain (AP) — Alexander Popov, out to reclaim his title as swimming's top sprinter after being stabbed a year ago, swam the world's second fastest time this year in the 50-freestyle, clocking 22.57 seconds Saturday in the prelims of the European Swimming Championships.

Popov, who has already won gold in the 100 freestyle in his first big meet since winning double gold in the Atlanta Olympics, cruised at the end when it looked like he could have gone faster.

Julien Sicot, a 19-year-old Frenchman from Martinique who trains in Bourdeaux, was second in 22.76 with third for Denis Pimankov of Russia in 22.89.

Popov, 25, was stabbed in the stomach on Aug. 24, 1996, in a skirmish in Moscow with a watermelon vendor just weeks after repeating his Olympic double gold from the '92 Barcelona Olympics.

Only Ricardo Busquets of Puerto Rico and William Pilczuk of the United States have gone faster this season (22.42). Jiang Chengli of China has also clocked 22.57.

Another Russian had a bad day.

Denis Pankratov, the defending Olympic and European champion and world record-holder, failed to qualify for Saturday's 200-metre butterfly final.

Pankratov, who managed only sixth place in the 100 fly, clocked 2:01.25 for 11th place — far off his world record of 1:55.22.

Pankratov, who has been racing almost non-stop since the Olympics and has



Russian swimmer Alexander Popov in action during the men's 50M event heats sessions during the European Swimming Championships. Popov set the best time clocking 22.57 prior to the final later in the day (Reuters photo).

the top 200 butterfly time this season in Europe (1:57.33), complained of being tired after the 100 final and said he should have skipped the Europeans.

Franck Esposito of France led the top eight qualifiers to the finals in a time of 1:58.58 with second for Denis Silantiev of Ukraine in 1:59.06 and third for Chris-Carol Bremer of Germany in 1:59.88.

"I knew right from the start Pankratov was out of it because his first stretch under water was too short," said Esposito, the 200 bronze medalist in the '92 Olympics.

In the women's 200-metre medley, Martina Moravcova of Slovakia qualified first in 2:16.57 with Susan Rolph of Britain second in 2:17.08 with third for Sabine Herbst of Germany in 2:17.48.

Moravcova has already won two silver medals in the 100 freestyle and 100 butterfly and was fourth in the 200 freestyle.

In the men's 100 backstroke, Ethan Urbach of Israel had the top time of 55.96 with 55.98 for Mariusz Siemida of Poland and 56.21 for Martin Lopez Zubero of Spain.

Lopez Zubero, 28, the

former Olympic champion and defending world champion in the 100 backstroke, is going for his fifth European gold. He said if he doesn't win here he may retire before the World Championships in January in Perth, Australia.

In the women's 400 medley relay, Germany qualified first in 4:12.00 with second for Russia (4:12.60) and third for the Netherlands (4:13.68).

The top three spots in the men's 1,500 freestyle — with the final set for Sunday — were: Emiliano Brembilla of Italy (15:10.65), Igor Snitko of Ukraine (15:15.71) and Ian

Wilson of Britain (15:23.22).

Ireland's Michelle Smith, entered under the surname of her husband — Erik De Bruin — has won gold in the 400 IM and 200 freestyle and silver in the 400 freestyle, but she withdrew from Saturday's 200 IM, citing fatigue and leaving only the 200 butterfly to swim when the 12-day meet ends Sunday.

The withdrawal means she will be unable to match the record of four individual golds in the Euros set by former East German Ute Geweniger in 1981 and Hungary's Kristina Egerszegi in 1993.

Villeneuve improves title hopes with pole success

SPA-FRANCOR-CHAMPS, Belgium (AFP) — Jacques Villeneuve hopes of overtaking Michael Schumacher at the top of the driver's championship were given a major boost here Saturday when he took pole position for the Belgian Grand Prix.

The Canadian, who is only three points behind Schumacher with six races left, dominated qualifying for Sunday's race as he claimed his seventh pole of the season and 10th of his 28-race career.

"With just three points between us in the championship and six races left it could go either way so it's important we work hard in tomorrow's race," said Villeneuve.

"I am very happy with pole and the car is looking very good for the race. From the first lap it was great — I just hope it stays dry."

"I was really pushing it at the end because I wasn't sure what the others were doing," he added.

Benetton's Jean Alesi, who is looking for a drive

for next season, put himself alongside Villeneuve on the front row.

Schumacher in the Ferrari was third fastest.

Villeneuve was only briefly knocked off pole by Alesi before reclaiming it on his second run with 0.3 secs to spare.

The French-Canadian will now be looking to press home his advantage in the 44-lap race as he finished with nearly a second in hand over Schumacher who has looked uncompetitive throughout the week-end.

The German, who has won three times on the track just 40 miles from his hometown of Kerpen, saw his chances of snatching pole late on wrecked when he ran out of fuel on his final lap.

Mika Hakkinen in the McLaren overcame a horrific 200mph crash during the morning's unofficial practice to get on the third row.

Hakkinen, told Yesterday that he was being retained by McLaren-Mercedes for next season, slammed into

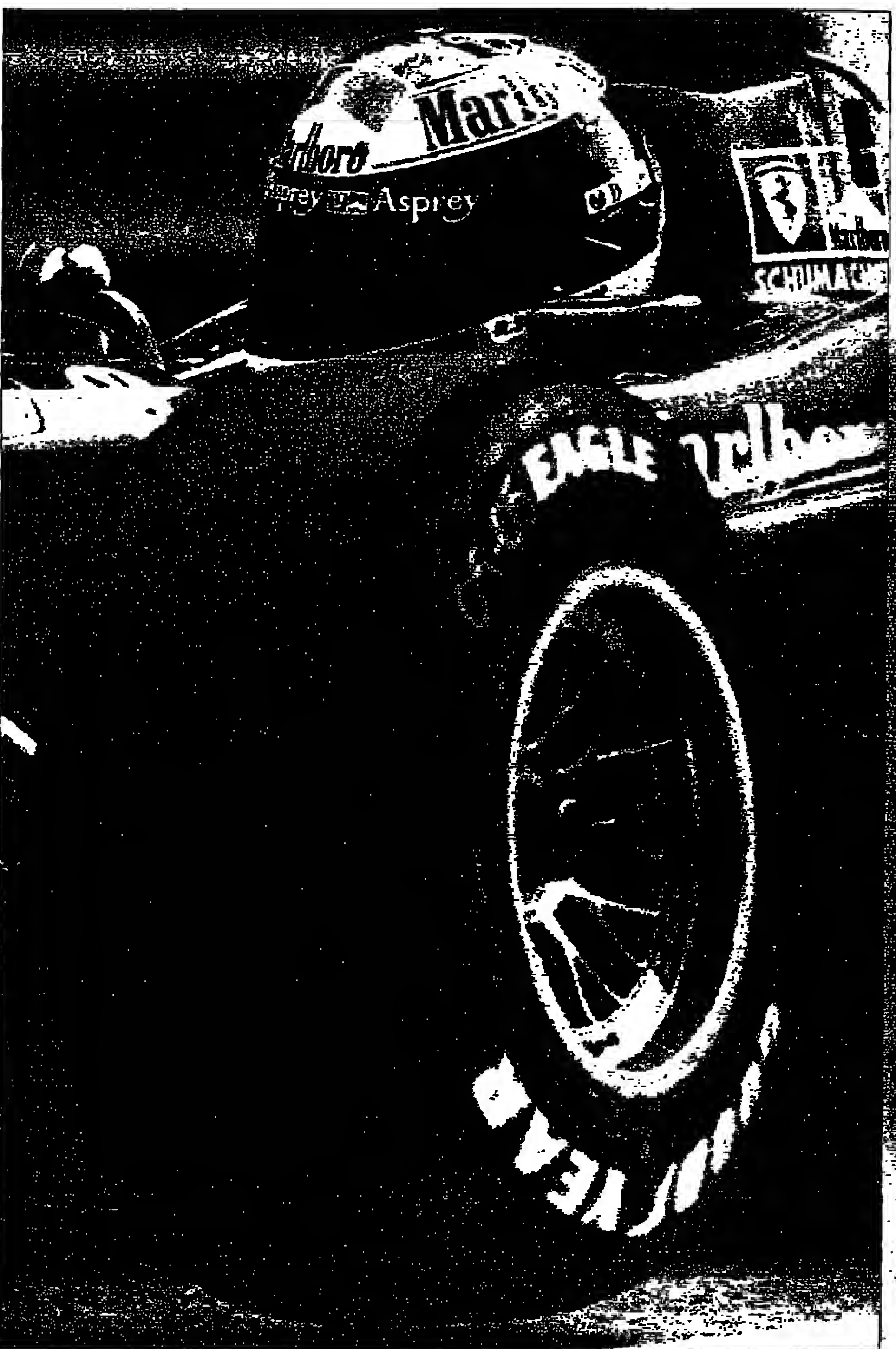
a guard-rail after the left rear tyre of his car suddenly shot-off.

The 28-year-old managed to scramble out of the car before lying down near the Les Combes section of the circuit while waiting to be taken to the medical centre for a mandatory check-up.

Hakkinen miraculously escaped from a similar high-speed accident at the Adelaide Grand Prix at the end of the 1995 season, but was forced to spend a month in an Australian hospital recuperating.

Defending world champion Damon Hill managed to put his Arrows on the fifth row but the Englishman was embarrassed by the fact that his teammate Pedro Diniz finished on the fourth row.

The 36-year-old Hill is trying to find a top drive for next season in his attempt to get back with a winning team and Diniz finishing ahead of him will have done nothing to help his cause.



German Formula One driver Michael Schumacher takes part in the second free practice session at the Belgian Grand Prix in Spa Francorchamps, southern Belgium (Reuters photo).

Ethiopia's sporting refugees make the running

Ethiopia's international sportsmen and women are setting records by seeking political asylum in ever greater numbers.

By Phil Minshull

LONDON — Ethiopia's nervousness about the World Cross Country Championships arises not from anxiety about the athletes' performances, but from fears that their track stars will fail to show up when it is time to go home.

Ethiopian sportsmen and women are regularly using sporting trips abroad as a chance to seek political asylum.

Six soccer players defected on a stop-over in Rome while on the way to Morocco to contest a 1994 World Cup qualifying match.

The match went ahead, but turned into farce, with Ethiopia taking the field with a team that included two reserve goalkeepers and an overweight, 40-year-old assistant coach, who lasted only 10 minutes.

One by one, other players followed his example until only six players were left, and, with 20 minutes to go and Morocco leading 5-0, the referee abandoned the match and awarded the game to Morocco.

Some of the players who stayed behind in Italy eventually turned up playing amateur soccer there and in Britain, although none ever got professional contracts.

Later that year, Kassa Tadesse, the world junior half-marathon champion, excused himself from the rest of the squad at London's Heathrow airport and sought political asylum in Britain.

At the 1995 World Cross Country Championships in north-east England, three Ethiopian athletes and a coach disappeared at dead of night and boarded a train for London. For more than a month, nothing was heard of them. Eventually, they tried to compete in a London race, but were barred from taking part by an angry Ethiopian athletics federation, via the International Amateur Athletics Federation, who learned from the media that they were planning to run again.

At last year's World Junior Athletics Championships in Sydney, another four runners sought asylum in Australia, and in January, there was a remarkable repetition of a previous group defection. The soccer team were once more off to visit Morocco — this time for an African Nations' Cup match — and again had to go via Rome.

This time, nearly the entire squad decided to seek asylum in Italy, where their fate is still being decided.

Besides these cases, several runners have sought asylum in Holland and Norway.

Among them is international marathon man Tekeye Gebrselassie, brother of multiple world record holder Haile Gebrselassie.

Many of those who have used their sporting prowess as a vehicle to seek asylum come from the Amhara ethnic group, the elite caste during the eras of both Emperor Haile Selassie and the brutal Dergue regime of Mengistu Haile Mariam.

The refugees accuse the present Tigrayan-led government, which overthrew Mengistu in 1991, of perpetrating the same crimes as its predecessor, but specifically against the Amhara, who comprise nearly a third of the Ethiopian population.

"Everyone thinks that it is OK in Ethiopia, now that we have a democratic government, but it is not OK," said Almaz Wondeferhu, the coach who was one of the four to leave their team-mates at the World Cross Country Championship in England two years ago.

"We were threatened and told to stop following our political beliefs," she added.

It was no easy decision for Wondeferhu. She left a husband and two children back in Ethiopia, and, after deciding to stay in England, spent many months wondering whether she had done the right thing.

However, the fear that worse might be about to befall them because of their views conquered all trepidation about being far from their families.

"It would have been too dangerous for us to go back home," said Berhane Dagne, fifth in the 1995 World Cross Country Championship junior race and part of the silver medal-winning team.

Like the other members of the quartet, members of Dagne's family have been imprisoned without trial at home, and she

could see a time when her accolades would not prevent the police from coming to take her as well.

Even Haile Gebrselassie, who splits his time between Ethiopia and his European training base in Holland, fears for what might happen if he spoke out about human rights abuses.

"It's too sensitive. I don't want to say anything," said the Olympic 10,000 metres champion.

Using sporting trips to seek political asylum is not the sole preserve of Ethiopians. In a high-profile incident just before last year's Atlanta Olympics, two of Cuba's boxing gold-medal hopefuls asked for asylum in the United States, while a regular stream of Cuban baseball players have sought a new life in the U.S.

Nor is it a new phenomenon. In the days when eastern Europe was under Communist rule, there were regular defections from East to West, notably the Czech-born tennis star, Martina Navratilova.

Nevertheless, Ethiopians are presently the most numerous sporting refugees.

Cynics have argued that the vast numbers seeking asylum is more to do with trying to find a better life overseas.

But most have arrived in their adopted homeland with only a smattering of the local language. They have generally had to survive on local state welfare hand-outs — hardly ideal for international sportsmen and women.

In addition, they all have to endure lengthy periods of uncertainty, not knowing whether they will be allowed to stay or be deported.

Dagne heard only in February, after applying for asylum nearly two years ago, that she would be permitted to remain in Britain for another four years.

However, because the British Home Office treats each case individually, the other three who sought asylum at the same time as her must continue to await a decision.

"Ultimately, I'm still an Ethiopian and I would like to go back to Ethiopia to see my friends and family, but I cannot do that while the present government is still there. And I suspect that will be a very long time," sighs Dagne — Gemini News Service.

Ludwig, Maylander take pole position for Suzuka race

SUZUKA, Japan (AFP) — German driver Bernd Maylander pushed his Mercedes to the fastest time on Saturday to take the pole position for the Suzuka 1,000-kilometre endurance race this weekend.

Maylander, teaming up with fellow German Klaus Ludwig, timed 1min 56.023secs on the 5.86 kilometres (3.64-mile) Suzuka circuit course in the qualifying practice.

The French-British team of Pedro Lamy, Allan McNish and Yannick

Dalmas took the second starting position for their Porsche 911 GT1, with the Frenchman scoring a time of 1:56.039.

A Mercedes team of Bernd Schneider of Germany, Alexander Wurz of Austria and Japan's Aguri Suzuki took the third position, followed by the Mercedes duo of Alessandro Nannini of Italy and Marcel Tiemann of Germany.

The Suzuka round is the seventh leg of the 11-round FIA Grand Touring Championship series.

TODAY AT

CINEMA TEL:634144
PHILADELPHIA "1"
Steven Spielberg's
THE LOST WORLD (JURASSIC PARK)
Starring: Jeff Goldblum & Julian Moore
Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30

CINEMA TEL:634144
PHILADELPHIA "2"
Jim Carrey ... in
LIAR LIAR
Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30

CINEMA TEL:699238
PLAZA
Tom Bringer ... in
THE SUBSTITUTE
Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 5:00, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30

CINEMA TEL:677420
CONCORD
CONCORD "1"
The movie event of the summer is here
Arnold Schwarzenegger ... in BATMAN & ROBIN
(12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30)
CONCORD "2"
ACE VENTURA 1
Shows: 3:30, 6:00 only

Nabil & Hisham's Theatre
TEL: 625155
The satirical play
AMN AI AI YA HO
performance starts at 8:30 p.m.
The theatre is closed every Friday.
For reservations call 625155

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Privalova resumes
AFP — Russian four-times
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out for seven week
AFP — Brazilian striker F
Seger, after suffering a groi
injury, has returned to the
Flamengo club. He is the only
player to score his side's only

Wolves
SHAMPTON, AFP — Form
star Seger, has joined Wolves
after this month, will provide
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Wolves manager Mark McGh
and to sign Aston Villa mid
of our price range," said M

Iran's new government starts work as woman appointed vice president

TEHRAN (AFP) — The new government of moderate Iranian President Mohammad Khatami went to work Saturday, naming a woman as vice president for the first time since the 1979 Islamic revolution and ridding bureaucrats of their "pompous titles."

After winning parliamentary approval Wednesday for his cabinet, Mr. Khatami got down to business and appointed Massoumeh Ebtekar, 36, a former journalist and professor, as vice president in charge of environmental protection, the official Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) reported.

Mr. Khatami owes a large part of his stunning landslide victory over a conservative rival in May elections to the support of women seeking social and economic reform in the Islamic Republic.

Setting the new tone for his government, Mr. Khatami on Saturday urged all state employees to ditch pompous and kow-towing titles when referring to him and his cabinet, telling them to use the simple adjective "respectable."

"The president believes that in the Islamic Republic of Iran, official letters should be stripped of all pompous formulas and kow-towing titles," said a

presidential statement.

Mr. Khatami's predecessor Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani gave himself the title "The Commander of Reconstruction" and Iranian leaders dating back to the U.S.-backed Shah have embellished themselves with titles.

Iran's new trade minister also took action to boost the country's faltering economy, vowing to halt a slump in the Persian carpet industry after two years of dramatically falling profits.

"We must revise laws governing exports, relaunch Persian carpets on the international market and lift legal obstacles so we can solve problems" in the industry, Mohammad Shari'atmadari said as he opened a week-long carpet fair in Tehran.

Mr. Shari'atmadari, quoted by state television, said he would draw up a strategy to promote carpet exports, the country's second largest source of revenue after oil.

The U.S. and European Union (EU) were also looking for signs of change in Iranian foreign policy towards a possible rapprochement after accusing Tehran of supporting international terrorism and seeking to build nuclear weapons.

But barely after being

approved Wednesday by a surprisingly large majority in the staunchly conservative parliament, the government was warned of "the limits" to its actions.

"Non-alignment and a firm line is an unyielding principle of the Islamic Republic," said Ayatollah Ahmad Janati, imam of Muslim prayers in Tehran and member of the influential and conservative Iranian constitutional council.

During Friday prayers, Ayatollah Janati said that "founding principles" of the government "do not change with the change of cabinet."

The conservative Shiite Muslim clergy, which dominated Iran's government before Mr. Khatami's shock victory in May, have also warned against the new president's reform programme, including more civil liberties and the rule of law.

"The defence of Islam, Islamic principles and the revolution is a stable policy and will be respected no matter which faction is in power," said Ayatollah Janati, who is close to Iran's supreme religious and political leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

Mr. Khatami does, however, have a strong popular mandate for his reform-

minded agenda after the biggest voter turnout here since the 1979 Islamic revolution toppled the U.S.-backed Shah.

This may explain why the conservative parliament, despite its strong reservations over several moderate cabinet nominees, overwhelmingly approved the new government to avoid a direct confrontation with Mr. Khatami for the time being, observers said.

The new cabinet contains a number of relatively young and moderate technocrats close to the new president and new faces in the key posts of foreign minister and oil minister.

There have already been some encouraging signs in a possible rapprochement with the West, as the foreign ministry called on the United States to show its peaceful intentions.

German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel also hailed the Mr. Khatami government as a new start in the strained relationship between the European Union and Iran.

Relations between the EU and Tehran soured after EU members recalled their ambassadors when a Berlin court ruled in April that top Iranian leaders were linked to the 1992 murder of four Kurdish-Iranian dissidents in the German capital.

Turkey says emergency rule gone by next year

ANKARA (R) — Turkey will abolish the emergency rule in force in the mainly Kurdish southeast by early next year, Deputy Prime Minister Ismet Sezgin said Saturday.

"Emergency rule will be lifted either at the end of this year or at the start of 1998," the Anatolia news agency quoted Mr. Sezgin as saying.

Emergency rule, one step short of martial law, has been in force in nine southeastern provinces since 1987, giving police and soldiers extensive powers of arrest and detention in their fight against an insurgency by Kurdish guerrillas in the region.

Emergency rule would be discussed at the next meeting of the influential military-dominated national security council on August 27.

Milliyet newspaper reported Saturday. Any proposal to lift emergency rule would effectively require the backing of the council.

Islamist leaders, should be closed down.

Turkey's powerful military, which sees itself as the guarantor of the country's secular status, was the principal force behind the law. A showdown with powerful army generals over the growing power of Islamists in this majority-Muslim state led to Mr. Erbakan's resignation on June 18. He was replaced by Mr. Yilmaz, whose government won a parliamentary confidence vote on July 12.

Mr. Erbakan has announced he will try to have the law repealed in Turkey's constitutional court.

Mr. Sezgin is the deputy leader of the centrist Democratic Turkey Party, junior partners in the three-party coalition government, which also includes Mr. Yilmaz's centrist Motherland Party and the Democratic Left Party.

took place in Istanbul, where 700 Muslims leaving a mosque in Beyazit, on the European side of the city, began throwing stones at journalists and yelling slogans against the legislation.

An attempt to march through the streets was blocked by a heavy police presence which had been put in place around the mosque earlier.

Smaller demonstrations in other parts of the country also led to arrests.

The main opposition Islamist Welfare Party of former Premier Necmettin Erbakan has been spearheading efforts against the new school law's implementation and calling for public protests.

Parliament last week approved the law, prepared by the secular coalition government of Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz.

Under the law, the secondary parts of more than 500 state-run schools training imams, or local

Ankara accuses opposition of trying to launch revolt

ANKARA (AFP) — Deputy Prime Minister Ismet Sezgin Saturday accused Turkey's Islamist opposition of provoking religious people to rebel against the government after the parliament adopted a law against Islamic schools.

"What they [the Islamists] are trying to do is to launch a rebellion and this is not acceptable," Mr. Sezgin told reporters in the central city of Konya, according to the Anatolian news agency.

"I warn them against provoking the people against the state after Friday prayers," Mr. Sezgin said.

His remarks came one day after more than 100 Islamist demonstrators were arrested during protests across Turkey against a new law authorising the closure of state-run schools offering religious education.

The bulk of the arrests



PROTESTING TOGETHER: Israeli peace activists join Palestinian protesters, Saturday, in a demonstration against Israeli government policy of demolishing Palestinian homes in the West Bank village of Qataneh. In the background is a demolished Palestinian house (Reuters photo)



CHILDREN AT ADULT ACTION: Palestinian youths push a burning tyre during unrest in Bethlehem Saturday. Some 300 Palestinians protested against what they called internal closure that Israel has kept on Bethlehem even though it lifted the closures on other areas (See story on page 1) (Reuters photo)

Iran invites Americans to make first visit since '80

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iran has invited a delegation of high-profile U.S. women to visit for the first time since Washington and Tehran broke ties in 1980, well-informed sources in Tehran said Saturday.

The Iranian women's group extended the invitation to the Americans who include at least five well-known academics active in public life, said the sources who refused to be identified.

The U.S. group would stay in the Islamic Republic from August 29 to September 4 and hold talks with Iranian women on "humanitarian issues, women and children," the sources said.

They would also meet government officials and diplo-

mats from North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) member states in Tehran.

The Iranian Women's Solidarity Association, which is close to the government, is trying to organise the trip.

It would be the first time a delegation of American women holding official positions have been invited to Iran for 17 years.

The U.S. broke diplomatic relations with Iran in April 1980 after Islamic militant students took hostages at the U.S. embassy in Tehran, triggering a 14-month crisis that humiliated Washington.

However, Washington described the election in May of moderate cleric Mohammad Khatami as

Iran's new president as an "intriguing" development that could herald a thaw in relations between the two foes.

An Iranian official urged the U.S. on Thursday to change its attitude towards the Islamic Republic.

"If the United States has no intention of continuing hostilities against the Iranian people, it must prove its political desire and change its attitude toward Iran," foreign ministry spokesman Mahmoud Mohammadi said.

He also said Tehran was able to make the distinction between the U.S. public and their government, and called on Washington to do likewise.

President Clinton remains silent, cool on Paula Jones sex scandal

MARTHA'S VINEYARD (AFP) — President Bill Clinton, on vacation off the New England coast, on Saturday was keeping his cool — and his silence — about the latest setback in the Paula Jones' sexual harassment suit.

At the end of the first of three weeks of vacation on this resort island, Mr. Clinton was playing golf when in far-away Arkansas, U.S. District Court Judge Susan Webber Wright set May 26, 1998, as the trial date for Ms. Jones' suit.

Ms. Jones, 30, is accusing Mr. Clinton of requesting sexual favours from her in May 1991 when she was an Arkansas state employee and he was governor.

After his golf game, the president dropped by a night spot partly owned by singer Carly Simon to celebrate the 30th birthday of one of First Lady Hillary Clinton's assistants.

With one arm draped around Carly Simon's shoulders, the president was studiously relaxed as he headed to dinner with wife Hillary and family friends.

From the beginning of this case, the president has let his

lawyer, Robert Bennett, speak for him. On Friday, Mr. Bennett said he was "pleased" that Judge Wright dismissed a portion of Ms. Jones' suit in which she alleged Mr. Clinton had defamed her, and he called the trial date of May 26, 1998, "a good date."

"We want to get it over with as quick as we can," said Mr. Bennett. He refused to predict an out-of-court settlement, reiterating, "the president will not apologise and will not admit to events that did not occur."

But just setting a trial date was a setback for Mr. Clinton, who had asked that Jones' \$700,000 lawsuit be dismissed altogether. Ms. Wright also let stand the allegations that Mr. Clinton sexually harassed Ms. Jones and caused her emotional distress.

Ms. Jones' lawyers have amply demonstrated that they are willing to play hard ball with the White House, issuing subpoenas seeking other women whom Mr. Clinton may have propositioned.

They recently tried — and failed — to convince a former White House staffer to testify that Mr. Clinton

harassed her shortly after becoming president in 1993.

They have asked Washington Post reporter David Maraniss, who wrote of sexual indiscretions in his Clinton biography "First in His Class," and Betsy Wright, former top assistant to Mr. Clinton when he was governor of Arkansas, for the names of women, who may have had affairs with Mr. Clinton.

It is not clear, however, that Ms. Wright will permit second- and third-hand testimony in the trial to discover what really happened on May 8, 1991, at the Excelsior Hotel in Little Rock, Arkansas.

Ms. Jones alleges that Mr. Clinton, who was effectively her boss, summoned her to his room, exposed himself and requested oral sex. Mr. Clinton has insisted that he cannot recall meeting Ms. Jones or making sexual advances toward her.

Whichever way the case is settled, it has already cost Mr. Clinton two million dollars in lawyers' fees. His sole consolation is that it had little effect on his 1996 reelection campaign and has not undermined his consistently good popularity polls.

Another way of saying farewell!

GENOA (AFP) — An Italian couple caught making love in an automatic photo booth in Genoa's busy train station found police less than amused with their moment of passion. Despite closing the curtain as their love developed, the pair made so much noise and rattled the cramped booth so much that a crowd formed in a flash, prompting police to investigate. The 32-year-old man explained that, finding they had half an hour to kill before his 30-year-old female companion's train left, the two had decided to take advantage of the time to say proper farewells.

Former employee leaves U.S. college a \$6.5 million gift

OXFORD, Ohio (R) — Arretha Cornell Sheriff, former student adviser who never earned more than \$10,000 a year, has left Miami University one of the largest gifts it has ever received — a bequest of \$6.5 million, the university said Saturday. The late Sheriff worked at the college from 1948 until 1962. She died two years ago at the age of 98 after living modestly in a retirement home for many years. Her bequest came with one string attached — that her name not be used. Georgina Silliman, a longtime friend of Sheriff, said that it came from her late husband's stock market investments.

Critics less drawn to Reeves' new singing career

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Keanu Reeves, better known for his acting in Hollywood movies, has put aside the silver screen in favour of the touring life with his rock 'n' roll band, Dogstar. Reeves, who starred in "Speed" and makes millions of dollars per movie, is enduring the travelling, fast food and little sleep on tour with vocalist Bret Dornrose and drummer Rob Mallhouse. But while the band has pulled in fans, the critics have been less drawn to Reeves' musical stylings. "We're fighting this credibility factor," one told U.S. magazine.

Gangsta Rap is drawing heavy criticism

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Death Row Records — the popular rap music label that boasts Snoop Doggy Dogg and the late Tupac Shakur — may be for sale, according to the Los Angeles Times. Now part of Interscope Records, the label's future was clouded by the nine-year jail sentence last November of co-founder Marion "Suge" Knight, 31, for parole violation. He was also barred from daily involvement in the record label. Seagram, which owns half of Interscope, has been pressuring the company to drop Death Row over concerns the label's so-called Gangsta Rap — whose lyrics glorify violence at abuse of women — is drawing heavy criticism according to the Times.

Train drivers wreathed in marijuana fumes

JOHANNESBURG (R) — South African train drivers have appealed for action from clouds of marijuana smoke wafting in passenger compartments and the country's corporation is probing the problem. "The drivers are complaining for while about drug smoke, but seems to be worse," said a spokeswoman of the state-owned Corporation.



MAYBE A MODEL, MAYBE NOT: Lebanese Cynthia Gharib (centre), winner of Miss Elite 1997 Look contest, raises her trophy late Friday at the destroyed city centre of Beirut. Christine Hajal (left) 2nd runner-up and Zeina Doumet (right) 1st runner up surround the winner. The International Elite Model Agency stages an annual competition in Beirut for potential models (AFP photo)